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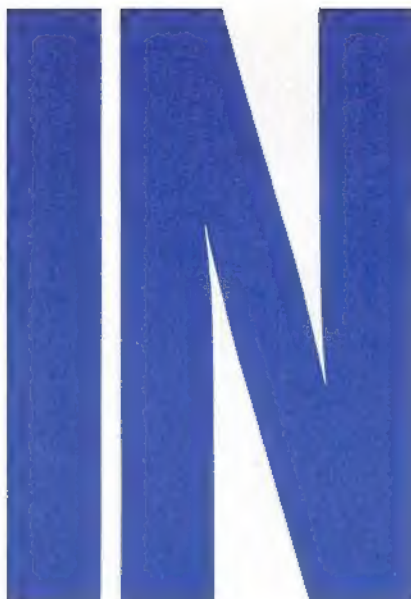


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May 1988

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TOP SPIN

Sure, we miss him when he's gone. It's not the same without him blustering around the place, yelling about the PMRC, pasta primavera, or his karate class; but with Bob Guccione, Jr., gone off for a conference, an interview, or a photo opportunity, there are all kinds of advantages. We can use the cappuccino machine and the executive pencil sharpener. We can drink red wine with our fish course if we choose. And I can sneak in and use his office.

For some reason, the gris-gris, the dragon's blood smeared on the door handle, and the extensive lock system tend to keep the lower class of editor out. But they don't know Bob like I do. I've spent time in North Africa, I've braved the Albanian record stores in Queens; the evil eye means nothing to me. It's a challenge. More than that. Deep in my heart, I know Bob really wants me to use his desk while he's away.

It's a swell desk, with all sorts of drawers and files and secret compartments, filled with Bob's letters and notes to himself and memorabilia. As those of you know who've followed Bob's long and varied career, his penchant for memos is legendary (see *Collected Jottings and Notes of Bob Guccione, Jr.*: Vol. 1-6, University of Chicago Press; entire set PLUS free SPIN T-shirt, \$89.95).

This is what always draws me to the desk. More than the pencil sharpener, the Watts line, or even the urge toward self-preservation (I was once able to alter a directive reading FIRE CULLMAN to read WIRE CULLMAN LOTS OF MONEY. That was a fun weekend), it's those notes.

I know there are probably small-minded souls wandering about who may think of this gentle perusing as snooping or even worse; but I view it as an opportunity to get to know my friend and employer just a little bit better, making life's rich pageant even richer.

How wonderful to find a letter that seems to have been written to Tri-State Editor Glenn O'Brien:

Dear Glenn,

Given these changing times and mores, what with the spread of AIDS and Republicans, I wanted to know if, on meeting a really hip chick, it's a good idea to kiss on the first date? And if I do, is it absolutely necessary to hire her for the magazine?

Signed,
Curious

And what a revelation to find this memo to Menswear & Executive Editor Bob "Robert" Keating on the rise of Jesse Jackson:

Bob—

If we go with the election special, how would you feel about Jackson on the cover? Would this help us get tickets to his brother Michael's concert at the Garden?

BC

But letters to others are often thought out, planned, held in check. Where you see the mind really at work, unhampered by visions of posterity, is in the notes to himself. Consider:

Could Pat Robertson cover the Butthole Surfers? Why don't any delis in the neighborhood carry Junior Mints? Does Leland really like this "rap" music or is he having me on again? Like that quad system he sold me last year. Can I get a really good fencing scar before the next photos are taken?

And, covered with doodles, markings, illegible phone numbers and bits of what seems to be slightly over-ripe brie, these thoughts on the parallels between music and agriculture appear on the back of a Farm Aid program:

The music industry is like a tractor. You have to treat it like a tractor. [Next to this is a meticulously drawn picture of a shiny red tractor being walked home to a very high-tech looking stable—track-lights and all—by a serious young man in a green jumpsuit. The sky is filled with birds.]

Beneath that, in a bolder hand, is written:

The music industry is like a plow. You have to treat it like a plow. [More whimsically, here there is a smaller picture of a happy, very bright-eyed man—Bob? One of the editors? Willie Nelson?—standing in a field holding a carrot in one hand and a portable CD player in the other. Another picture is stained beyond recognition by what seems to be '73 Chateau Medoc.]



Courtesy Jennifer Lee



Photo: Schuster/SIPA

I hope this stuff never gets into the wrong hands. Bob's a great guy, but those metaphors of his are going to get him in trouble one of these days.

—Brian Cullman

Top: Richard Pryor marries his fourth wife, Jennifer Lee, in Maui in 1982. Above: The people of Arizona seek divorce from governor Evan Mecham.

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POINT BLANK

Letters

No known Cure

Being a fan of the Cure, I bought your March issue upon sight. I did this not only because it was the first time I have ever seen a cover story in an American magazine on the Cure, not including things about Robert Smith's new haircut, but also because I knew that SPIN is quality publication and that they would give me a no-bullshit view of one of my favorite bands. I was not disappointed. However, I did find offense in being referred to as a "waif" by a man whom I respect as an artist and not just as the next step up from Duran Duran for teenage girls. I am a normal, no hairspray music listener from the Midwest, and I was wounded to hear that Mr. Smith finds it a bother for me to buy his records. I'm sure I'll continue to do it anyway, due to the fact that I realize that most good artists are twits.

Also, on page 46 of this otherwise great issue, the picture was incorrectly identified as the Cure. It sure looked a hell of a lot like Echo & the Bunnymen to me.

Todd Hutlock
Lorain, Ohio

I find it rather ironic that the group Robert Smith called "dreadful" in your March issue of SPIN somehow managed to grace the top of page 46, masquerading as the Cure, no less! If that's not Ian McCulloch and the rest of the Bunnymen, still one of the best bands ever, I'll promise never to visit Liverpool.

Brian J. Osentoski
Pontiac, Michigan

"Echo and the Bunnymen, what a dreadful group." I wonder who said that, maybe Robert Smith? I wonder who felt like being funny? Maybe SPIN? The Echo and the Bunnymen photo above the Cure caption was quite painful. It was either a brainless misprint or a bad joke.

Cym Reed
New York, NY

Keep it up, guys! At this rate you'll be able to tell the difference between Bruce Springsteen and Tiffany before you know it.

Jef Kahn
Gaithersburg, MD

Hi, I'm Chris, your blind photo editor. That incident (we in the business don't like to use the word mistake) with the Cure story falls under my jurisdiction. While I do feel pretty bad about it happening, I was actually sick that week—honest—and uh, it wasn't my fault. Seriously though, we here at SPIN regret the error and apologize to both The Cure and Echo and the Bunnymen. We're also glad you're paying attention.

Burst her bubble gum

Kudos, congratulations, etc. to John Leland for his insightful interview of Debbie Gibson [March]. Best quote of the interview: "I'm very driven, even though I don't drive." Jesus, what a fresh, young comedic talent.

Edward Huerta (Dios)
Long Beach, CA

Haven't we all had enough of this mindless, prepubescent, bimbo rock? Face it—Debbie Gibson has no Elvis in her and never will! Let's save today's youngsters from this garbage by turning them on to real bands like the Connells, the Call, R.E.M., the BoDeans, the Pogues, the Cure, etc. Just say no to Tiffany, Taylor, Jodi, and Debbie, for keeps!

Anne M. Pillars
Julie A. Fiala
Sabrina C. Whitlow
Beloit, WI

Wronged 'em boyo

Christopher Hill cites *Give 'Em Enough Rope* as a rock 'n' roll moment where the spirit of the Clash peaked [March]. He's forever disappointed they didn't stay there. What he doesn't understand is what a moment really is. Just that. Not a career, not a lifetime. All you can do with a moment like *Rope* is be glad for it when it happens, take it for all it's worth, and remember it when it's passed.

The Clash moved on to *London Calling* and yes, to *Sandinista!* They experimented and some experiments fail. (Even so, with such gems as



Separated at birth?: Robert Smith of the Cure (right), and Ian (Mac) McCulloch of Echo and the Bunnymen.

"Rebel Waltz," "Look Here," and "Up in Heaven," I'd hardly call *Sandinista!* a total loss.) The important thing is that the Clash weren't content to stick with the early formula that unequivocally worked. That would have been safe, and safety was not what they were after.

¡Viva la revolución!
Jeff Eldridge
Austin, TX

Surely the Clash suffered from a serious dissipation of energy in their final years. But the dismissal of *Sandinista!* and *Combat Rock* as mere drivel ignores the artistic growth of the band. Back in 1980, who else was hitting such a range of now-trendy issues as Irangate ("...the cocaine guns are jammed downtown..."), the homeless ("...the ragged stand in bags soaking heat up through their feet..."), evangelism ("...after all these years, to believe in Jesus..."), and urban drug abuse ("Kick junk, what else can a poor worker do...")? Although they could not rise above the ego, money, and drug problems that burn out most bands, they did attempt to find new ways of bending three chords, a bass line, and a riff. Those who condemn legitimate experiments with different musical genres should occupy themselves reviewing the latest Ramones, Black Flag, and Grateful Dead records.

Mark Hankins
Washington, DC

Tennessee faults

Thank you for the informative article on my birthplace, old stomping

grounds, and now-city of residence, Memphis [February]. However, I was sorry to see such places as Charlie Vergos' Rendezvous (where Mick and Keith and the boys have eaten many a barbecued rib), Audubon Park (where I threw up my first beer after a Cheap Trick concert in 1980), T.G.I. Friday's (distinctive only because Chrissie Hynde was arrested there), and, for God's sake, the Antenna Club, omitted from your listed points of attraction. And am I to believe that any of your researchers actually spent any time here? Last time I looked, the "Memphis Academy of Art" was the Memphis College of Art, and Pat's Pizza was still on Summer, not Sumner Avenue.

It's good to have SPIN back.

Elspeth Woods
Memphis, TN

Ill mannered

As a seemingly well-educated college student, I find it hard to believe from his "professional" response to Dr. Duesberg's study [AIDS column, February] that Dr. Robert Gallo is an actual scientist! If Dr. Gallo was so worried about the effect of Duesberg's report on the population, then he should have taken the time to present his own studies to SPIN and not just dismiss Duesberg's ideas as "...silly... nonsense... cock and horse shit."

I don't know which scientist is correct (if either), but I do know which one seems to be full of mindless banter and cerebral drool.

Anthony Lentych
Crawfordsville, IN

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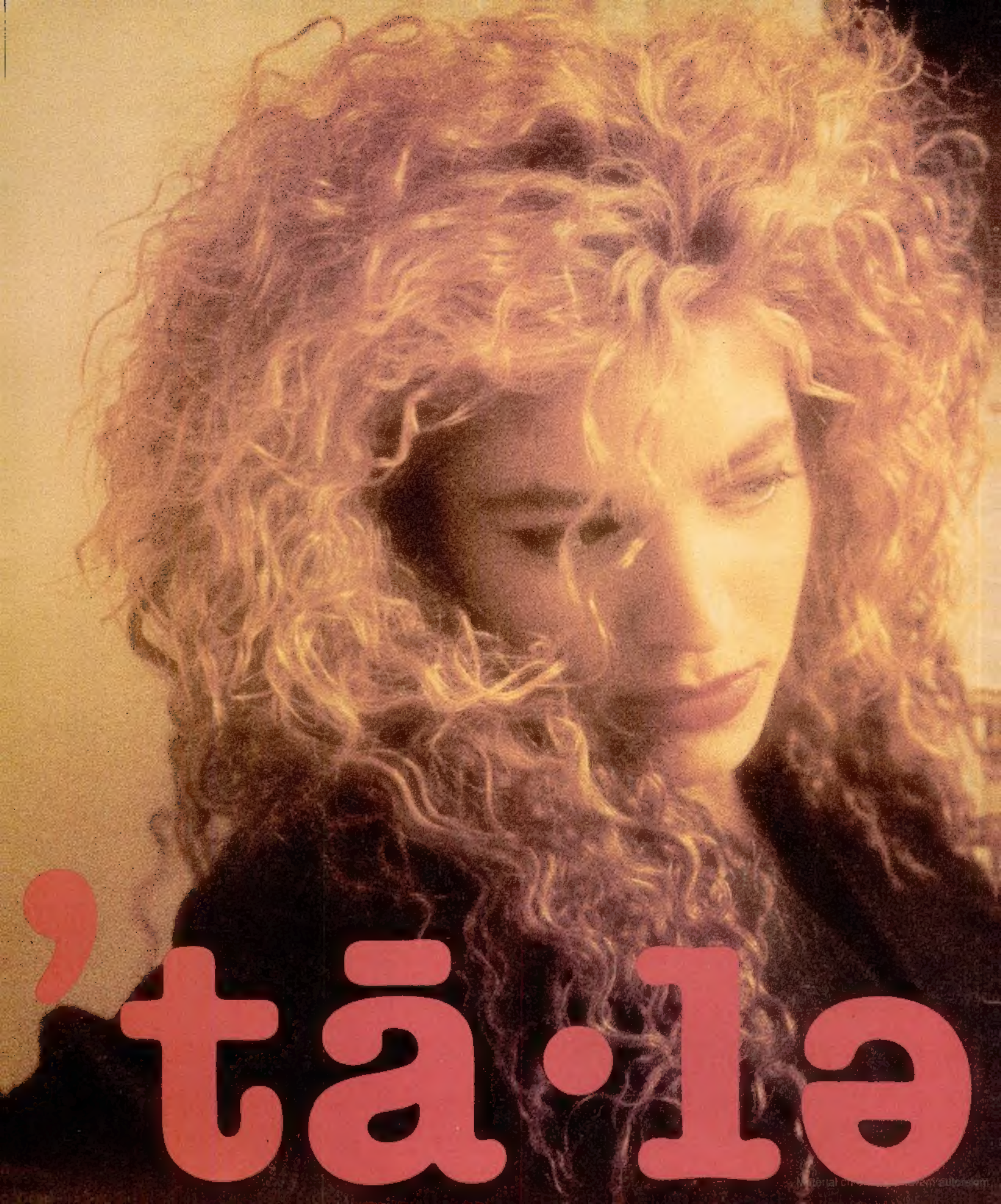
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FLASH

Taylor Dayne, Black Flames,
Band of Susans, The Rat Pack, Keith Sweat,
Blotter Acid Art, Pat McLaughlin, Yanni,
Missed Information.

Before her "Tell It to My Heart" was a hot top ten hit, before she jet-setted off to Europe, where she met Robert Plant and U2, before her whirlwind promotional tour of the United States, when Tiffany was still eating pizza at the shopping mall with the rest of the kids, and Debbie Gibson was watching Merv Griffin with her mom and dad, Taylor Dayne was singing Russian folk songs phonetically in a restaurant and it wasn't the Russian Tea Room.

Before Taylor Dayne became Taylor Dayne, she worked at the Odessa Club, one of a bunch of Russian restaurant clubs in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, where the audience—mostly Russian immigrants—is not considered one of the youngest. She was hired (through her brother Hugh, who owns an entertainment production company) to sing American pop songs, and ended up singing mostly Russian Gypsy songs three nights a week.

"I'd go to the bandleader's house," she recalls, "and he'd play the records for me, and we'd write out the words phonetically and I'd memorize them in a couple of hours." One of the most requested songs she sang was "Senec Enee," meaning "light snow," which nostalgically describes old Russia. She also sang some Italian songs, phonetically, for the Russians who had to lay over in Italy before immigrating to the United States.

"I was there two years. They had patrons who came weekend after weekend, and they would pay big money for me to sing certain songs. I made money money. They'd tip \$20 a song, \$100 a song. The Americans were

cheap. We knew we weren't making money when the Americans came, usually on Saturday nights. And I'd work there until real late in the morning, until the last person left the building, if he was still tipping."

During the week she was making tapes and records and she knew the Odessa was not where she would be for the rest of her life. "I had already been working with Ric Wake, who I had met just by hustling around, going to auditions and handing out demo tapes for over two years, and I had said I wanted to get more black dance music, and the first song I did was 'I'm the One You Want.' Two years later I was working predominantly on black urban records and playing in black clubs, but it wasn't getting me a hit record. I started hunting around for a song, and I met this guy Anthony, who I went to school with, who knew someone at Warner-Chappell Publishing, who met me on a pouring day in front of Swenson's in Rockville Center, and gave me a tape which had 'Tell It to My Heart' on it, which we made into more of a club-oriented song. A major record company was interested the day after we finished it."

And why the name change?

"To protect the innocent. It had to do with past records and a past with connections and connotations I didn't want. I had records out in the past that I don't want people rehashing and getting money off of. I'm not the only one who got scarred in bad business deals, that's for sure. The name's been changed but the singer's the same."

—Scott Cohen

Courtesy Anita Records

r'daan



GREAT BALLS OF FIRE

Not only does it sound like the kind of thing you'd read in *Teen Beat*, it is the kind of thing you'd read in *Teen Beat*: four kids rehearsing for an audition at the Apollo Theatre get themselves discovered. An audition is scheduled with a major record label and they're signed instantly. Management even signs them over a more famous group of the same ilk (named later in this article). This isn't about being cool so much as it's about being seriously cute.

There was only one problem: the Flames—Don, Joe, Nate, and Yahyah—needed a modifier. After all, their most successful peer group wasn't merely Edition, but New Edition, and the Flames didn't have the polysyllabic advantage of their predecessors, the Temptations. They had to do something. Rick Rubin and

Russell Simmons did it. They signed them to both Def Jam Records and Rush Town Management, added "Black" to "Flames," and reserved a space for them on the *Less Than Zero* soundtrack.

Their sound is old, their look is new. They snap, spin, and do splits. They harmonize. But they're B-boys (as opposed to slick post-pubescent in matching tuxedos) with gold rings, high-tops, and one removable gold tooth to prove it. They can all sing lead and they average 35 girls a day on the recognition barometer. Not bad for four kids from Newark whose debut LP is barely out. The best teen-zine material I've ever seen.

Which makes perfect sense considering they started singing to get girls. They still sing to get girls. In fact, they checked out almost every

The Black Flames look for love and modifiers: (L-R) Don, Joe, Nate, Yahyah.

girl who walked by the restaurant. Don, Joe, Yahyah, and Nate openly admit to having crushes on Salt, Pepa, Spinderella, and Kim "Facts of Life" Fields, respectively.

In a recent radio interview, New Edition mentioned that there's this new group on the block they'd like to do battle with. The Black Flames heard, and they're flattered and ready. "We're not going to say we can or we can't beat them, but we're ready to let the audience decide."

—Jessica Bendinger



BAND OF SUSANS

Once there were three and now there's only one, in this band of five, named Susan, but they're not going to change their name—which just goes to prove what Band of Susans has said all along: There's nothing to the name. Still, the misleading-cum-meaningless moniker gets them saddled with lots of misunder-

standings—all-female group, right, sorta like the Bangles? Once you hear their dense guitar sound, though, the only confusing thing about this remarkably normal bunch of musicians is how affable and without affect they are. This, while they build a wall of sound in the heart of lower Manhattan.

The name remains the same: (L-R) Alix Morgan, Ron Spitzer, Susan Stenger, Karen Haglof, Robert Poss.

Content on an indie label for now, and willfully eluding identification with any New York music scene, this three-guitar ensemble (Robert Poss, Karen Haglof, Alix Morgan) includes sole remaining Susan (Stenger) on bass and Ron Spitzer on drums. Poss, Stenger, and Spitzer, a thirtyish trio who grew up together in Buffalo, New York, met with SPIN, over guacamole and beer, to discuss the release of their first LP, *Hope Against Hope* (Blast First/U.S.), and spring tours of England and the U.S.

Why a guitar band now?

Robert Poss: It's the heart and soul of the universe. We're in love with distortion, you see. There's no high level of rationality about it.

Susan Stenger: The three guitars work together as equal parts. We have no traditional guitar hierarchy. For a wall-of-sound guitar band, you have a real pop sense that emerges on both *Hope* and last year's EP, *Blessing and Curse*. Will you move toward more pop?

Robert Poss: Not at all. Probably more toward angular and abrasive sounds.

Do you expect your sound to change with the new lineup?

Susan Stenger: Not because of the new players. But we want to experiment more with bass, and vocals, and contrasting textures. We've hardly begun to tap what we can each bring into the band.

Do you bemoan the lack of a big scene for little bands?

Susan Stenger: Well, we've all been musicians for years.

Ron Spitzer: We're realistic. We're not scenemakers. We're sufficiently jaded and have no camps. We're satisfied with that.

Robert Poss: Lots of bands have guitars. We have no monopoly on that. But we do have a continuity of desire—we're in for the duration.

Band of Susans's symphonic din is both primitive and grandiose—it makes a field of noise in which sounds seem to self-generate, expand, and multiply in waves. The band projects nothing to package save their tracks on vinyl. "But we're not boring, we hope," Poss adds. Actually Band of Susans is a great relief from the heavy-lidded *sturm und drang* of their rock brethren. Is this the advent of adult noise, which has nothing to do with easy listening?

—Barbara O'Dair

THE RAT PACK

BRAT PACK, SCHMIRAT PACK / HELL! I REMEMBER THE DAYS OF THE RAT PACK! SAMMY & FRANK & DEAN & PETER—YEAH, JOEY, TOO, AND ME—WE WERE A WILD BUNCH! I REMEMBER ONE TIME WE TOOK OVER THIS CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRY—WHAT WAS IT? PARAGUAY? NAH, COSTA RICA, THAT'S RIGHT!!



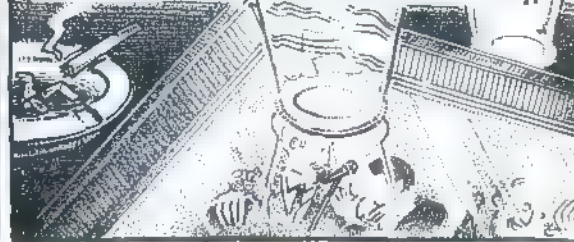
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Real Sweat

Keith Sweat is still hanging on to his Wall Street job. His debut single, "I Want Her," hit the top of the R&B charts, and his self-produced LP, *Make It Last Forever*, has gone gold, but Sweat, rather than quitting his job as a brokerage assistant for Paine Webber, is only taking a six-month leave of absence.

The abundance of ballads on *Make It Last Forever* has critics comparing Sweat (his real name) to Vandross and Pendergrass, but Sweat doesn't like the comparison, especially since he writes almost all of his own material. "I don't want to be a sex symbol. I enjoy my music, and I just hope the people who listen will, too. I'm singing because I enjoy what I'm doing.

If they enjoy it, I'm happy." It's hard to imagine ladies cooing over (or making out with their boyfriends to) "Tell Me It's Me You Want," but that's different from drooling over a poster, which, by the way, the twenty-six-year-old Sweat's good looks may encourage.

But as the man said, that's not what he's going for. "Whatever feels right" is his credo. A musician first and foremost (as his eight-piece band reveals), his tour is not a prerecorded sing-along fest. Sweat's for real. If that translates into female enjoyment, that's okay by him. As "I Want Her" testifies, his musical roots are more funk than schlock.

—Jessica Bendinger



David Ann Saunders

Graphic by Bob Schuler/Solution

BLETTED OUT

If you thought you'd seen the last of certain little bits of paper that you may have consumed over the years, think again. The San Francisco-based Institute of Illegal Images, which has collected over 80 individual squares and entire sheets of paper dipped in LSD-25, is taking its "Cure of the Soul" exhibit on the road.

In the beginning, circa 1980, the collection was literally "scraped out of wallets and pockets," according to Mark McCloud, the institute's founder, who had considerable difficulty keeping the institute's holdings from being nibbled away. For obvious legal reasons, the LSD had to be neutralized. A Miami drug analysis lab did this by exposing the LSD to ultraviolet light. Then it was put behind glass and framed.

McCloud says he faced some resistance, but none of it was from the police. "Dealers would call me up in the middle of the night and say, 'Man, you're crazy. You're

going up the river. They [the police] don't care whether it's neutralized or not.' Then they'd see the show and call me: 'Listen, I got a really great sheet for you.'" Once people realized that McCloud wasn't trying to make a buck off of other people's work, the contributions came in. Which is why he wants the next exhibit to appear in Los Angeles, where, McCloud says, "the largest manufacturers of LSD during the Sixties—the late John Griggs and the Brotherhood of Eternal Love—were.

"The best part of the show is the parent/child teams. You'll see a mother showing her daughter around and pointing out the acid: 'This is the stuff I took.'"

—Carlo McCormick



YAKETY-YAK

"Being on the road hasn't tarnished our viewpoints toward women. If anything, it's made us better in bed."

—Dave Mustaine, Megadeth

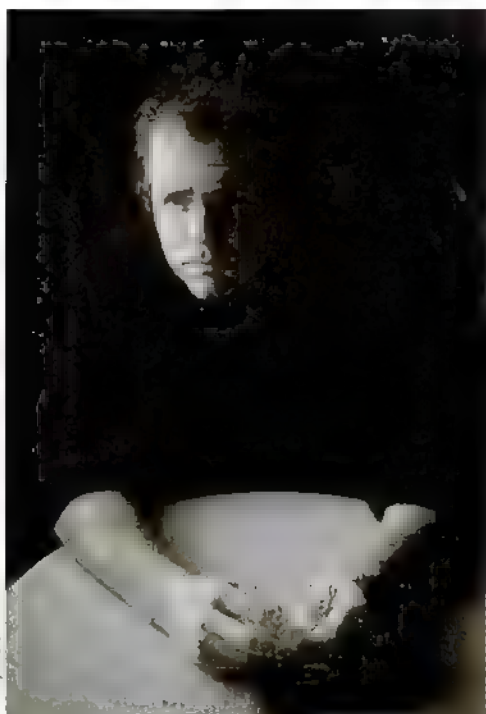
"I don't compete with Rick Astley. He's inconsequential, a decoy thrown out by the government."

—Andrew Eldritch, Sisters of Mercy

"You've got sixteen-year-olds in tie-dyes, taking loads of acid and mushrooms and listening to no one except the Dead. It's frightening."

—Vicki, of the Bangles, on L.A. teenagers

BLUE-EYED SOUL BOY



Dewey Nicks

Before Pat McLaughlin got a record contract, at the age of thirty-eight, he was doing a lot of blue collar work, mostly construction jobs, and moving from city to city. "I'd move anywhere at the drop of a hat," he says of those days. "If I had \$400, I'd relocate." When he grew tired of working as a short-order cook at Mike's Deli in Boston and playing for spare change on the Common, he loaded up his car and drove to New York City, but "I kinda saw what New York is like, and I think I just didn't want to move there and be double-parked, unloading my stuff." Instead he moved to Nashville, where he didn't have to worry about the parking. Or anything else: "Lynda," which he co-wrote with Bill LaBounty, was a number one country hit for Steve Wariner. McLaughlin also wrote every song on his major label debut except, curiously enough, the one that Capitol Records has decided to release as a single, Allen Toussaint's "Wrong Number."

Born and raised in Waterloo, Iowa, the youngest of seven children, McLaughlin was greatly influenced by his next older brother's collection of Lou Rawls and Otis Redding records. Blue-eyed soul is the best description of the music on *Pat McLaughlin*, but there's also country influences. Produced by Mitchell Froom, who's also recorded Los Lobos, Crowded House, and Richard Thompson, the album takes a perceptive and dry look at adult relationships, like being broken-hearted, walking around the house at night, turning on every light ("Heartbreak from Havin' Fun"), or turning over and looking at the woman lying next to you, your best friend's wife ("Moment of Weakness"). Listening to this LP and seeing McLaughlin live, hunched over his red, battered Fender, one gets the gut feeling that his potential is enormous. One also feels that McLaughlin doesn't think about it much. "I've never had a whole lot of success and if I get some I know it'll be a fleeting thing," he says. "I went through a series of cars with no trunks, like El Caminos and Japanese pickups. And now I have a car with a trunk so I feel like I've pretty much made it."

—Jack Rosenberger

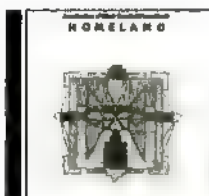
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YANNI

We're talking serious overachiever here. If you'd grown up in the same neighborhood as Yanni, your mother would have done a lot of "Why can't you be like him, you slug?" You might have tried hating him for a while and given up, because, face it, Yanni can't help it if everything he does turns out annoyingly well.

What he's doing really well now is recording big, wide instrumental pieces on the synthesizer, using eclecticism and his Greek roots to steer the middle course between pretty New Age pabulum and sterile technodrone. His new LP, *Out of Silence*, on Private Music, is a good example of how Yanni brings the machines to his musical impulses and not the other way around. The album is his valediction to his hometown, which was recently demolished by an earthquake.

Yanni grew up in Kalamata, Greece, hearing every ancient Greek good-time stomp by the time he was three, tuning in to Italian music, French pop, U.S. Grade A rock 'n' roll, and eerie Middle Eastern yawping on the short-wave ozone. Music was good fun, but what Yanni really wanted to do was swim, and being goddamn perfect, he broke a few national records when he was fourteen, going on to train five hours a day with American coaches in preparation for the Olympics.

That didn't pan out because, being an impulsive 18-year-old, Yanni moved to America in 1973 to study psychology, and he couldn't do that until he learned English, and he couldn't do that if he was underwater. So he gave up swimming and got a



Chris Culberson

psych degree instead. Being that this guy has a three-year attention span, he then gave up psychology, went on the road with a succession of bands, culminating in the sort-of-well-known Chameleon, before getting into synthesizers.

Yanni's music is good for projecting movies in your head, so it's no surprise that he's looking toward film scoring, and, hell, why not start at the top? Last year he finished composing the music for a Vatican-approved, Robert Evans-produced documentary on Pope John Paul. Yanni's dutifully respectful when talking about Mr. Supreme Pontiff, but get him going on the process of making musical decisions and he dives off on a 50-meter verbal freestyle: "For the assassination attempt, Robert wanted to have no real sound, wanted to get away from the same trite gunshots and crowd screaming. What happens is there's an edit point that's so abrupt, the way you see the gun and hear the shots, it's totally unexpected. It happens right after John Paul is holding a baby in his hands, and I put it down, and then it happens. There's a feeling that hits you right there, it makes you a little sick."

"But I take that, and I take you to the cleaners."

In the expression on his face, a little war takes place between the scariness of the emotion and his pride in manipulating an audience. The field is still new to him; he still gets a rush from thinking about it.

Son of a bitch will probably win an Oscar.

—Ty Burr

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INFORMATION

MISSED

From **Bone-head** to skinhead: The president of Chrysalis Records, Mike Bone, let **Siobán O'Connor** shave his head recently, thus fulfilling his bet that O'Connor's *The Lion and the Cobra* LP wouldn't sell 50,000 copies. To date it's sold more than four times that.

▲ **Keith Richards** is in Memphis recording with the **Memphis Horns** for his long awaited solo outing on Virgin Records. ▲ Former Graceland landlord **Elvis Presley** wasn't much of a businessman. Despite lifetime record sales in excess of **\$500 million**, 33

movies that grossed over **\$180 million**, and countless TV specials, live concerts, and gaudy Las Vegas extravaganzas, the king of rock 'n' roll collected less than **\$79 million** in after-tax income during his lifetime. ▲ **David Crosby** has just shot a TV commercial for **Rock Against Drugs** in which he says: "Four things can happen to you if you do drugs: you can go crazy; you can go to jail; you can die; or you can quit." Crosby, who has been off drugs and booze for more

than a year, has been acting crazy. ▲ **The animal lovers** at the National **Pork** Producers Council are promoting pork as "The Other White Meat." In an effort to improve their **public image**, some changes are being made. The **National Pork Queen** Contest will be discontinued after this year in favor of a gourmet pork-recipe contest, and the **National Porkettes**, an organization of pork-producers' wives, will rename themselves the National Pork Council Women. How kosher. ▲ A **Yugoslav folk singer** was sentenced to sixty days in jail and fined \$80 for refusing to sing a song glorifying **Tito**, the founder of Communist Yugoslavia. The song: "Comrade Tito, We Pledge to You that We Will Not Swerve from Your Path." ▲ **Hüsker Dü** has broken up. Official statement: "Due to philosophical and creative differences, the members of Hüsker Dü have decided to go their separate ways. There is no further information at this time." ▲ Efforts are being made to build a **retirement home** in Florida, for ill or elderly former rockers, such as **Dee Clark**, whose hits included "Hey Little Girl" and "Raindrops." Clark suffered a stroke a few years ago, and reportedly is living on \$30 a week in a welfare hotel in Macon, GA. ▲ One Monkee didn't need the money. **Michael Nesmith** inherited **\$25 million** from his mother, who invented Liquid Paper. ▲ The estate of **Andy Warhol** has signed an agreement with the **Cabbage Patch Kid** people, giving the company

exclusive rights to the artist's name and works. What next? ▲ **Tiny Tim** is in Nashville recording an LP. ▲ **George Michael**, whose *Faith* LP has sold over 10 million copies worldwide, credits **Tipper Gore** and the PMRC, who led the attack against his "I Want Your Sex" single when it was released last fall, with boosting American sales. "For a while it seemed like I was sex spokesman for young people," Michael says. "As Americans like to say, there was much 'hoopla' about nothing. It was, after all, just a pop record."



Johnnie Miles

The world's most famous blues guitarist and singer, Riley B. King.

Ƨoni Childs

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Union



This album was made by David Tekig, David [unclear], and Ƨoni Childs.

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Courtesy Island Records

SPINS

Platter du Jour

The Pogues *If I Should Fall From Grace with God* Island

I used to worry that I drank too much, that my gambling was getting out of hand, that my language was offensive, that I spent too much time daydreaming, that my outlook on life was fatalistic, that I was incapable of sustaining a long relationship, that I would never understand money and that eventually I would go to prison for a crime I did not commit. Then I started listening to the Pogues and stopped worrying. Today I stand before you and proudly declare, "Hey, world, I'm a Drunken Irish Bastard and if you don't like it, well, here, I got something your wife might like."

Drunken Irish Bastards used to be hot tuna, man, with guys like Eugene O'Neill, F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, Damon Runyon, John Huston, Ring Lardner, John McGraw, Stephen F. Foster and all the rest of them fightin' and fuckin' and fallin' down all the way to the top. Then, I don't

know what happened, but all of a sudden it was no longer cool to stagger around, slurring epithets and peeing into the potted palms at the El Morocco room while horrified autograph seekers looked on. Christ, look what happened to Declan MacManus (slave name: Elvis Costello) when he tried to revive Drunken Irish Bastardy in the late Seventies. Poor guy got his glasses knocked off by Bonnie Bramlett just for mouthing off. You should've heard what Fitzgerald used to say about Ray Charles.

Shane MacGowan is the new savior of Drunken Irish Bastards. Unstable, boozed-up visionaries of Irish descent are turning up on more and more "What's Hot" lists, thanks to the songs and brave vocals of MacGowan and the play of his Pogues. I expect this, their fourth album, to do for the proliferation of the DIB what Farrah Fawcett did for the curling iron. Tom Waits, Irish, drunken, and a bastard (just ask Ricki Lee Jones) could've led the new movement ten years ago but he had to go and sing like an old Negro. The Pogues realize that the key to being

Drunken Irish Bastards is to be absolutely white. Their music is virtually devoid of Negroid influence. This is white boy funk music, the stuff our ancestors created when they were as oppressed as blacks are now. It's got guts and soul, and will make poor people dance until 4 a.m., even if they have to be at work at 7 a.m. Drunken Irish Bastards with talent become writers, musicians, and artists so they can sleep until two in the afternoon and not have to get dressed until five minutes before they go out for the night.

You don't have to drink or be a bastard to fully appreciate the Pogues, but you do pretty much have to be Irish. And if you're Irish, why aren't you drinking, you bastard? After all, you still haven't found what you're looking for and you won't sleep until you meet up again with that pair of brown eyes that were looking at you. Irish people are always searching for something that they know they'll never find.

The Pogues explore the problem of standing up, even when sober.

The Pogues
Talking Heads
Les Frères Erköse
Prefab Sprout
Dynatoners
Bill Frisell
Woodentops
T Bone Burnett
Robert Plant
Wayne Shorter



The dream dies every day and, as at an Irish wake, the mourners toast their dead and sit around the coffin getting drunk until the pain is acceptable. Drunken Irish Bastards go through that ritual every night as penance for the sin of not finding the answer to the big question. If you can swing it, like the Pogues, you put your Hail Marys and Our Fathers on albums and release your Act of Contrition as a 12-inch single.

Though originally I thought this album was as flawless as a body in a bikini in *Sports Illustrated*, repeated listens have tempered my enthusiasm and exposed a few clunkers. Songs I don't play anymore are "Turkish Song of the Damned," which sounds like a non-LP B-side by the Psychedelic Furs, and "Sit Down by the Fire," which finds MacGowan's crowded lyrics racing the tempo and losing by a head. About half of the time I skip "Fiesta," which is what you might expect if Madness covered a Los Lobos song, and "Birmingham Six," an obvious ode to oppressed Irish rebels over a

melody Debbie Gibson would find simplistic. Still, this LP on cassette will cause more wear on the rewind button than on the fast-forward. The title track is so good that I usually play it again after I hear it the first time each day. I also can't get enough of "Lullaby of London," the corny yet stirring "Thousands Are Sailing," and the Christmas single, "Fairytale of New York." "Bottle of Smoke," about putting it all on a long shot and watching it win, is so badass and pounding and bold that it'll spit whiskey in your eye if you so much as think of calling it "Runyonesque." If the Clash were nuts about Irish music instead of reggae, they'd have woken up every morning and tried to make "Bottle of Smoke."

The Drunken Irish Bastard is back. He smiles through rotten teeth, dressed to swill in a baggy black suit. He's standing there where the dreams end, trying to put his soul into words that match the tempo of his heart. He's the man who knows too much about something he can't name and it drives

him crazy until the liquor finally rescues him and the ghosts take him home and put him to bed.

—Michael Corcoran

Talking Heads Naked Sire

Following Talking Heads from their early days as a nervous awkward three-piece at CBGB has been a long, strange, and mostly exhilarating trip. That's what made *Little Creatures* and especially the band's versions of auteur David Byrne's *True Stories* songs so dispiriting: those records weren't halfway strange, they definitely were not exhilarating, and *True Stories* in particular seemed too long to listen to all the way through. I thought the Heads had blown it. They were marking time. They were becoming the one thing I never thought they'd be: irrelevant.

But all that's in the past. *Naked* is

more than a return to peak form for a band that's probably been the most consistently creative rock unit of the past ten years; *Naked* is a revelation. The African experiments of the *Remain in Light* period have evolved into a subtle, deeply-felt mastery of world-music currents; the band combines percussion and harp-lute from Francophone Africa, a brass arrangement that struts New York salsa style, and a groove as deep and muddy as the Congo river, and makes the resulting



song sound like nothing but pure Talking Heads. And those eerie, swamp-funk moves that helped make *Speaking in Tongues* such a darkly entrancing record have broadened and deepened as well.

There's a dramatic, deliberate difference in mood and motion from the first side to the second. On side one, the core band of Byrne, Jerry Harrison, Tina Weymouth, and Christ Frantz takes advantage of the wealth of African pop talent resident in Paris, where *Naked* was recorded, augmenting the foursome (who are credited with collectively composing all the music) with talking drums, a 21-stringed *kora* (exquisitely meshing with Byrne's guitar on "Mr. Jones"), and percussion instruments ranging from oil drums to dried seed pods. Stir in a big, funky horn section (arranged by Lenny Pickett, with an assist on one track from Jerry Harrison), ex-Smiths guitar maestro Johnny Marr, accordionist James Fearnley, on loan from the Pogues, and veteran sessionman Eric Weisberg's pedal steel guitar, and you've got a truly multi-national jumbo.

Side two eliminates most of the horns, brings the guitars out front for some of the most deliciously delicate six-and-twelve-string interplay in recent memory, and slows the kicking, upbeat grooves of the first side down to a moodier, more meditative glide 'n' slide.

But the distinction between sides doesn't seem artificial. It gives the lis-

Above left: David Byrne: "I can't get used to this lifestyle."

tener two choices, two very different moods to immerse the mind and heart in. And while the music divides the album right down the middle, Byrne's thoughtful, incisive, worried, pissed-off, profoundly *human* lyrics tie everything together.

Byrne's singing is an even more powerful unifying factor. Somehow, he's managed to impress his expansive stagecraft—the goose-neck geek-walks, the range of emotional expression, the projections of psychic nuance—into the grooves of this record. There can no longer be any doubt that he is one of rock's greatest singers. And the words—well, there he's in a class by himself.

In the thoroughly enchanting "(Nothing but) Flowers," Byrne imagines a utopian transformation of an everyday American landscape he's learned to see afresh, possibly through his work with William Eggleston's color photographs for the *True Stories* book. "There was a shopping mall, now it's all covered with flowers," he whoops, adding encouragingly, "You got it! You got it!"

By no means is everything this light-hearted. Like the original talking heads, the band's namesakes, those apparently bodiless cookie-pusses who deliver all the news that's depressing every night on TV, Byrne takes a good look around. But he doesn't just report the news, he tussles with trying to understand it. "The Democratic Circus" is the best song anybody has come up with on the subject of government by photo-opportunity, and in "The Facts of Life" he paints impressionistic wordscapes across a very broad canvas: "Someday we'll live on Venus/Then we'll walk on Mars / We'll still be monkeys / Down deep inside...and let our instincts guide us/Oh no no no...."

Naked isn't a downer, though. It's an upper. It's so full of life, so jam-packed with intelligently conceived and fully realized ideas, so truly felt, so user-friendly, it's like one of the "machines of love" Byrne sings about in "The Facts of Life." Vinyl with vital signs. Let it glow. Let it grow. The Talking Heads have.

—Robert Palmer

Les Frères Erköse Turquie—Musique Tzigane Ocora

I know how it goes with the kind of people who read this magazine. You tell them about a Turkish record and all they can think of is the impassioned refinement of Akagündüz Kutbay, Kani Karaca, Nezihi Uzel, and the whole of the dervish and classical traditions. They want to sit in the sun at the Kafe Bulvar, order double *ihlams* all day, look at that turquoise dome, and dream of an embraceable infinity and Rumi. But you know it's

not all like that, and besides, the Kafe Bulvar closed down a couple of years ago when they widened the prospect.

This record is more like sitting amid the happy chaos of the Passage of the Flowers. People you have never met are sharing unpronounceable food with you, that table over there has burst into song, here comes a band of strolling musicians, and it's time for the second dancing bear of the day. You know the story. Only you'd be very lucky indeed, in the Flower Passage or anywhere else for that matter, to encounter a band of strolling players anywhere near as good as the Erköse Brothers, presented here.

Violin, oud, clarinet, zither, and hand-drum, the usual instrumentation, but played with unstoppable vitality, by men who are evident masters of their instruments, in a spirit of raucous celebration that must express a whole way of life because nothing else could have so inspired and informed it. It is music to leap out of your chair to, leap out of your flesh and attempt the dances encoded in your atoms to, if only you could convert their mortal mass into immortal energy. Or words to that effect. Turkey is a hard country; being a Gypsy there is probably harder, so the kind of joy that comes off this record is not an expression of lovely California weather or the satisfactions of owning some new shiny object. It is tied to the realities of earth, a resistant and resilient medium, and the need for celebration of it, its nightclubs and cemeteries, onions and paying customers, in the midst of its hardships, olives, omelettes, and policemen. Without false notes or feelings, it is an invigorating affirmation of the whole shebang. What's it



sound like? Dance rhythms, soaring clarinet solos, likewise violin, unaccompanied taksims, height, breadth, depth, and frequent leaps beyond dimension, all of it recorded in excellent lo-fi by Kudsi Erguner, who knows a great band when he hears one. I like this better than the other record I'm reviewing this issue and I like that one quite a lot.

—Rafi Zabor

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Some guys have it all.



Prefab Sprout From Langley to Memphis Epic

I'm in a predicament here. I want to convince you to buy the new Prefab Sprout LP, *From Langley to Memphis*, but I don't think I have the proper language or forum to do it.

You see, Prefab Sprout make smart, pretty music. But smart, pretty music doesn't lend itself to exciting criticism. Nasty, vulgar, sexist shit does. It's my theory that heavy metal is once again being shoved down our throats by the more attention-hungry critics simply because it makes for good copy. You can use lots of vivid, provocative adjectives when writing about Slayer or Megadeth or whatever atrocity, and your review instantly leaps right off the page. Then the reader closes the magazine, forgets the mild-mannered articles about sensitive humans like Prefab Sprout, and instead spends endless sleepless nights obsessing about Satan's Pig Fuckers.

I don't want you to forget Prefab Sprout or my name. So, I'm going to break all journalistic rules and feed you nothing but bald-faced lies. This way, you'll talk about me to all your friends, buy several copies of *From Langley to Memphis*, and land me a book deal with your uncle in publishing. Now that's effective criticism. (If you really want the truth, follow my footnotes.)

Prefab Sprout's *Suck Daddy's Dick, Bitch!* is the greatest LP ever made!¹ Play it once and you'll want to kill your parents! Play it twice and you will! It's the only record worth owning!

SDD, B!'s first track, "Motherfuckers of Metal," is Prefab Sprout at their blood-dripping best! It makes Motörhead sound like Joni Mitchell!² Nothing can compare with lyrics like these: "We're the motherfuckers of metal sent straight from hell/We've got sales figures even Whitesnake and Whitney can't outsell!" To give the next track an extra touch of realism, Prefab Sprout open "Hotrods and Snatch" with the actual screams that slut Nikki Sticks brought to her death-bed!³ What was she doing in the way of his car, anyway?! Then, to the ac-

companiment of riffs so raw they'll wreck your stylus, the Sprouts prove that drinking while driving is the only way to travel!

I could go on and on!⁴ Well, I would, but I can't keep myself off crack for that long! So just play "The Devil Told Me to Eat My Dog" backwards while staring into the pentangle hologram printed on the label and it will tell all you stupid lemmings what to do! It'll tell you to buy twenty copies of this goddamn record! On CD! Why the fuck don't you sissies have it already?! MasterSprout Paddy McAloon is now on his way over to rob your grandmothers' gravestones! SEE YOU PUSSIES IN HELL!!!

¹What Prefab Sprout do extremely well is set difficult emotions to ornate melodies and dreamy textures. *From Langley to Memphis* lacks the confessional pain that made 1985's *Two Wheels Good* so powerful, but it's still a rewarding record, one that gets better with repeated listenings.

²The jazzy, introspective adult music of the Seventies—Joni Mitchell, Steely Dan, Fleetwood Mac, and Michael McDonald-era Doobie Brothers—is the tradition Prefab Sprout are bringing back in their own ideosyncratic way.

³One of Prefab Sprout's aural joys is the way full-time back-up Sprout Wendy Smith adds "ba-ba-ba"s and "doot-doot-doot"s behind Paddy McAloon's conversational verse. Listen to the Springsteen parody, "Cars and Girls," and recall when Shirley Jones worked a similar magic behind David Cassidy for those beloved Partridge Family classics. The Andrae Crouch Singers, Pete Townshend, and Stevie Wonder also lend assistance.

⁴*From Langley to Memphis* contains too many fine songs to discuss deeply within these footnotes. Despite having four producers (including Thomas Dolby and McAloon himself), one of the album's pleasures is its very consistency. But of particular note is "The Golden Calif," where Prefab Sprout sound like a completely different group—they rock hard. But not too hard, thank God.

—Barry Walters

The Dynatoness Shameless Warner Bros.

Bar bands, show bands—you tell me what to do with 'em all these days, cuz sympathetic as I remain to the form, I can't tell anymore. I mean, aside from his taste in friends and his geographic proximity to the NYC music biz, I have no idea why someone like Southside Johnny (who I have nothing against) got to make so many records instead of any number of similar bands I've



Robyn Souvenberg

heard and liked much better that might not move you at all.

Anyhow, I think these guys the Dynatoness have a lot going for them with their contempo-soul fusion, but they have enough problems that their foray into the world of big labels and bigger radio chains will not be easy. Despite great taste in offbeat cover material, their original songs are a little too earnest for the idiom; and C. C. Miller, whose grainy voice falls about halfway between Kim Wilson (who makes a guest shot here) and Rod Stewart (who doesn't), isn't a distinctive enough stylist to pull off the showstopper-type ballads, with the exception of "Old Habits Die Hard," the Spectorish arrangement of which covers beautifully for his limitations. But hey, after you get past those hurdles, this sextet can churn out the party sounds, from the "Brown Sugar" feel of the opening "Heartbreak Radio" through the soul-metal vamp of "Italian

Shoes" to the menacing Memphis beat of "Beware." Guitarist Larry Dunn and saxman Tony Perez are a pair of screaming soloists, and the early ensemble work comes off as something Huey Lewis and the News might attempt if they weren't so worried about sweating on the job.

And I'll give 'em points for walking that extra mile, too, in that instead of playing a "La Bamba"/"Twist and Shout" medley like most bar bands do, they instead rework an obscure Berry Gordy song ("Shake Sherrie") so that it begins with an allusion to the former and ends sounding much like the latter. Old habits do die hard, y'know?

—John Morthland

Bill Frisell Quartet Look Out For Hope ECM

Bill Frisell is the Clark Kent of the electric guitar. Soft-spoken and self-effacing in conversation, he apparently breathes in lungfuls of raw fire when he straps on the battered Gibson SG he holds together with tape and a prayer, plugs it into a dizzying assortment of delay loops and reverb and distortion pedals, turns on his small Marshall amp, and starts to play.

If the resulting sounds that spill over, under, and around themselves as they twist through time and electronics don't have any kind of name



yet, that's because Frisell has coined them. His music's not what is typically called jazz, though it turns on improvisation; it's not rock 'n' roll; and it sure ain't that tired dinosaur called fusion. In one of the single biggest leaps of imagination since the Yardbirds and Jimi Hendrix, Frisell coaxes and slams his hovering, split-toned ax into shapes of things to come. There's the eerily haunting underwater Hammond that states the melody of the menacing title track, which his solo transmutes into the Ventures-drop acid-and-visit-Hades. There's the open-skies country feel that brings out the expansive pedal-steel keening lurching around "Little Brother Bobby." There's the cowboy-across-the-border wistfulness that sighs with muted melancholy through the achingly beautiful "Lonesome." There's the quirky humor of Thelonus Monk's "Hackensack," which Frisell brings out so vividly by letting his guitar lines trail off like flapping underwear drying on some backyard New Jersey line.

But besides being a guitar genius—in case you want more—he's turned into a terrific songwriter: Like Monk, Frisell's harmonic and melodic ideas form a succinct, seamless mesh with his *outré* sonic and rhythmic ideas about his ax. And besides that—in case you're one of the truly greedy—he's backed here by the quartet he's dreamed of assembling, whose consistently warping sense of intonation and rhythm matches his own: an odd-voiced combination of Hank Roberts's alternately singing and screaming electric cello, Kermit Driscoll's nimble, off-kilter bass, and Joey Baron's ridiculously inventive drumming. And if you need anything besides all that, why are you reading this review, anyway?

—Gene Santoro

The Woodentops Wooden Foot Cops on the Highway Columbia

England's Woodentops are the kind of group that helps you remember that long ago, in a galaxy far, far away, people got into rock 'n' roll bands and started making music mostly because it was a fun thing to do and it made them and those around them feel good. Born in 1984, and taking both name and basic philosophy from the skiffers who played acoustic guitar (i.e., "woodentop") and rattled the British music infrastructure in the Fifties with a pridefully unschooled blend of folk, blues, and rhythm 'n'

blues (John Lennon, don't forget, started his musical career as a skiffle band leader), the Woodentops' exuberant mishmash of punk, folk, and soul provided a much-needed tonic for mid-Eighties England's gloom and doom brigades. Still, enthusiasm alone can only carry one so far, and it quickly became apparent that the band's flying-in-on-a-strum-and-a-prayer execution was ill-equipped to sustain (for the long haul anyway) the musically ambitious leanings of its guiding light, singer/writer Rolo McGinty. Please note, though, that I used the past tense there. For somewhere along the road to their new album, *Wooden Foot Cops on the Highway*, the Woodentops picked up violin and keyboard player Anne Stephenson, and between her presence and that of guest guitar wizard Gary Lucas, the group has rallied to produce an engaging and diverting second studio album that bodes well for its future.

One of the distinct advantages of having no image-setting style or pattern is that you're really free to try anything, and that's what the Woodentops do here. "Maybe It Won't Last" and "Stop This Car" are high-energy numbers that'll have you gasping for air, (the latter propelled by Stephenson's fine work on what can only be described as punk violin), while the country-flavored "No One Makes Me Feel" (embellished nicely by Lucas' National Steel slide guitar), and the folkish "Tuesday-Wednesday" weave their way through you slowly and gracefully. Even funk is squarely within the group's grasp here, both on the rollicking "They Can

Say What They Want," which pits "Bridge on the River Kwai" whistling keyboards against heavy metal guitar riffs and hip-hop scratches, and the pick-to-click "What You Give Out," with its skittering calvinet rhythms (courtesy of extra ringer Bernie Worrell) and James Brown-styled bass lines.

The one constant that connects all of this is singer McGinty. Whether whooping it up in a soulful falsetto on "No One Makes Me Feel" or swooping down in a stream of consciousness barrage on "In a Dream," he presides over the music with a smile that can be heard right through the speakers. And he still sounds as if the only reason he's at it is because making music is fun. To which I say, may the force be with them.

—Billy Altman

T-Bone Burnett Talking Animals CBS

T-Bone Burnett is easier to admire than to love. Admire him I do—his "less-is-more" production has boosted the careers of a bunch of fine new American rock 'n' roll talents; he speaks for a grown-up version of Sixties musical and spiritual values; he's smart and funny and says cool things.

Loving him would be easier if he didn't make such *dry* records. Dry as his wit, dry as the stoppered aridity of his voice, dry as the elegant austerity of his production. All these things are

appealing, but together they betray an emotional aridity, a certain distance from his performances.

For an example, listen to "Wild Truth." Sort of leaps out of the gate, kicking out the folk rock jams, and oh my, what a job T-Bone has done for himself here as his own producer. Maybe his best yet. That sweet/tart sound, a teasing hint of lushness in the gamboling acoustic strum, yanked into stern discipline by the skeletal rickety smack! of the drums. Gets you right up out of your chair as T-Bone calls on the holy spirit to crack open

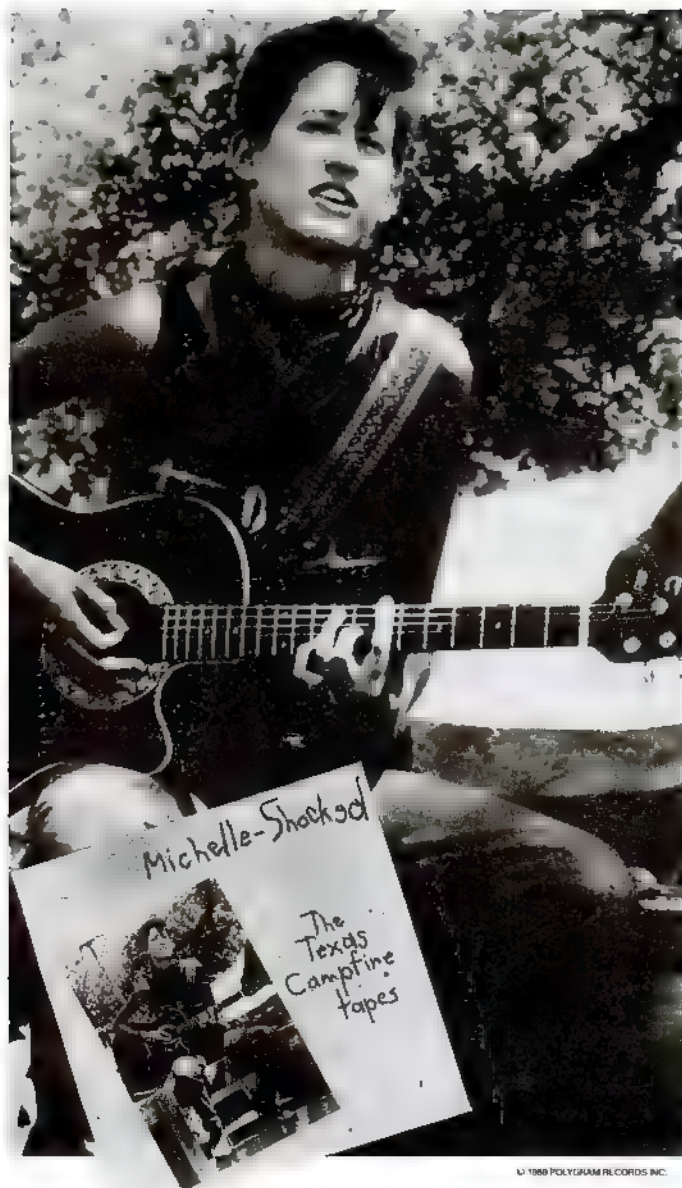


the mildewed house of Reagan. The whole effect recalls John Lennon's "Gimme Some Truth" (in fact, a lot of this record echoes the sound of John's early solo work). But the great thing about "Gimme Some Truth" was that John Lennon sounded so pissed off. You can listen to T-Bone's song, fine



Right: Chief Woodentop Rolo McGinty steps out from behind the mask. Above left: Bill Frisell.

Courtesy Columbia Records



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The story of the TEXAS CAMPFIRE TAPES and MICHELLE SHOCKED

Michelle Shocked was "discovered" by an English producer at a music festival in Kerrville, Texas. She was playing guitar and singing by a campfire, and she agreed to let him record her songs on his walkman.

"The Texas Campfire Tapes" is an album from the original walkman-recorded songs, with only a field of crickets and an occasional passing truck keeping rhythm.

The result? A brilliant album from a compelling artist. A #1 hit on the U.K. independent charts resulted in tours with Elvis Costello and Billy Bragg.

"The Texas Campfire Tapes" by Michelle Shocked. A rare, personal glimpse of an unusual and exceptionally talented young woman.

ON MERCURY COMPACT DISCS, CHROMA CASSETTES & RECORDS.



as it all sounds, and still not be certain he's really mad. Likewise, "You Could Look It Up" has a certain immediate aural rush, held in bristling tension somewhere between *Meet the Beatles* and "Cold Turkey." But he uses so many allusions to describe the girl he meets in a bar—her F. Scott Fitzgerald name, her Lauren Bacall looks, her "Titian" hair—that it defeats the immediacy of the sound, taking away any sense of this as a real encounter. And in his bitter moral satires—like "Image" and "Dance, Dance, Dance," and "The Strange Case of Frank Cash," where he probably thinks he's being witheringly sarcastic—he ends up just sounding snide.

T Bone Burnett has a fine understanding of rock 'n' roll, but if he wants to make a record as compelling as some he's produced, he'll have to get out of his head and work closer to his heart. Where, after all, the wild truth really lies.

—Christopher Hill

Robert Plant Now and Zen Atlantic

Being a Gemini, I lit two sticks of incense. The package said "Frank Incense." A misspelling? Heaven knows whether it was that scent or the microwaved leftover curry from Nirvana, or perhaps it was sound—Now

and Zen on the stereo for the first time, the night air heavy with expectation from the opening arpeggio, my windows wide open to the cool argon glow which danced on its own from the alley lamp—but by the end of the first side, a rush of wind whooshed in through the grey, and He came to me.

There was a clunk, and a thick, silver-and-turquoise gauntlet rolled across the floor and came to rest by my feet. My eyes traced the glove's path back across the floor, and I could just make out His form, planted like a yogi on an ancient Persian carpet. His arms were crossed at the wrists against His chest, hands clutching the collar of His gold-trimmed robe, jaw set, eyes stern. Near his head, four cryptic symbols hung mid-air, twisting and shimmering. Knowing that at such times my voice will usually betray the way that I feel, I mutely handed Him His jewelry.

"Thank you," He said.

Finally I stammered, "You're welcome, Bob."

"I've turned over a new leaf," He said. "I've matured. No more of this hiding from the past—just listen to 'Tall Cool One' for the splices of 'Black Day' mixed in. And no more of this hiding from the press, either. For this record's release, I charted a whistle-stop tour of critic's living rooms,

Robert Plant: Zen mumblings from the mountaintop.



George Bodnar/Reina Ltd.

hopped on my rug, and hit the road."

"So we can't make this an exclusive, then," I ventured, trying to hide my disappointment.

Looking disgusted, He continued: "I've come to terms with the Seventies, you know. What with all these groups that idolize Zeppelin now, I may as well take my credit where it's due. Besides, I guess you have to own your past to get past it, to do something new. And this record's the proof."

"All this synth stuff kind of reminds me of what Stevie Winwood's been doing lately," I said.

"Well, when I heard the demo of 'Heaven Knows,' I had to get Phil Johnstone and Dave Barrett, who had written that song, to collaborate on the rest of the tracks. Phil plays keyboards. They're quite talented. And being younger, have some fresh ideas. Course, Pagey added his guitar to 'Heaven Knows,' and 'Tall Cool One.'"

"You know, Bob, I've been meaning to ask you about some of your other recent collaborations with Page, like those sessions that were rumored to be—"

And He shook his head, and the symbols began to fade. He recrossed His arms, and I suddenly noticed that the exquisite carpet had a fringe around the edges. "But then I suppose, anything goes," He was singing, or perhaps it was the stereo. Then He was gone.

—Sue Cummings

Wayne Shorter Joy Ryder Columbia

From the cozy retrospect of this album and its equally fine predecessor, *Phantom Navigator*, you can see that Wayne Shorter has gotten his post-Weather Report writing together since his initial, largely acoustic outing, *Atlantis*. All that he needed to put the music over were drum machines, big synths, and hi-tech electronics; in other words, all the anomic bullshit usually employed to make empty, lifeless music seem full and alive, but which in his case gives his quirky and original pieces the size and impact they need. Shorter is probably doing today's best writing in a straight jazz-rock idiom—the word "straight" is an escape clause for Ornette Coleman—and Joy Ryder is once again pre-eminently a writer's album. There is more than a little improvisation on the date, but it's heavily contextualized by the compositions, not to mention the towering synths: On the title tune, possibly the album's best, Shorter's high, electrifying solo entrance leads to an improvisation that is not quite swallowed but is dominated by the written synthesizer accompaniment. This must be the way he wants to pres-

ent himself on record—if nothing else, the mix tells me so. Heard live, he cuts loose and generates at least as much power as a soloist as he does with his writing. Shorter has forgotten nothing: He is still one of the great improvisers. You get that man here too, but in more discreetly measured doses.

The writing is hard to describe, unpredictable in its resolutions, planar, massively architectonic in its unfamiliar juxtapositions of dissimilar thematic blocks. Some of the bass lines, as on the title tune, suggest new ways of writing counterpoint. You don't go away humming these tunes, but they stay with you by means of their atmosphere and weight. I know one thing: If I were writing music, any kind of music, I'd be studying these pieces very closely.

We knew from Weather Report that Shorter's saxophones sound great bezeled by electronics; now we're learning where he will take the sound now that he's running the show.

—Rafi Zabor

SPIN-OFFS

NIKKI SUDDEN & ROWLAND S. HOWARD *Kiss You Kidnapped Charabanc* (Relativity) Nikki Sudden, ex-Swell Maps, achieved an apotheosis of Keith Richards/Johnny Thunders acoustic-heart's-blood-poetry on albums like *Robespierre's Velvet Basement*, reportedly one of Tom Waits's all-time favorites. Rowland S. Howard played guitar for Australia's semilegendary Boys Next Door before he and bandmate Nick Cave formed the Birthday Party and took their swamp-punk to England, where the band imploded after making the scarifying *Mutiny* EP.

So much for history. Right now, Sudden and Howard are achieving a rare chemistry. They've used the resources of the recording studio to make a duo album even more intensely gripping than *Get Lost* (*Don't Lie*), the recent SST release from Howard's new band These Immortal Souls.

In fact, *Charabanc* (the title is apparently a cut-up of the titles of several books the pair were reading) may be Howard's finest hour. On "Sob Story" he plays electric guitar sort of the way Stuart Gordon directed *Reanimator* and *From Beyond*—six-string mayhem guaranteed to slice 'n' dice your brainpan.

Sudden's songs here don't quite rise to the heights of earlier masterworks like "Silver Street," but his "Debutante Blues" will do just fine until Keith Richards's solo album gets finished, and in "Crossroads" he pulls off the next-to-impossible feat of making shopworn Delta blues iconography into something that bears comparison



Courtesy Relativity Records

with the originals but is wholly his own. *Charabanc* may be uneven in spots, and it's deliberately raw. But it kicks like a two-headed mule.

—Robert Palmer

Nikki Sudden

and neither sold more than five digits' worth) re-proves. Get it.

—Gene Santoro

TELEVISION *Marquee Moon* CD (Elektra) Mention Television (the band, that is) to most rock critics, and the reaction isn't very different from what happens when a thirteen-year-old hears about George Michael.

There are reasons for that. When they (Tom Verlaine and Richard Lloyd on guitar and vocals, Fred Smith on bass and vocals, Billy Ficca on drums) descended on CBGB in the late Seventies, they not only changed that club (which was then showcasing Country-Bluegrass-Blues) but revamped the music. From the Byrds they borrowed chiming, twining guitars, pinched nasal vocals, and a folkie's intense belief that their lyrics should mean something. From the Yardbirds they took unusual sonic textures and the extended slash-and-burn rave-up (Lloyd, like Jeff Beck, used to attack his guitar with a mike stand), and mixed into it more sophisticated improvisations coming out of Mingus and Coltrane and Dolphy (Verlaine had studied some sax as a kid and transposed the bluesy wail he found in his heroes from the bell of the sax to his fingers and wang bar) and the earlier psychedelic bands who'd been listening to them, like the Grateful Dead and Quicksilver Messenger Service.

The results were incandescent and unforgettable, as this fine CD remix of their first LP (they only made two legit,

WILL AND THE BUSHMEN *Gawk* (Mustang) One could loosely reference Alabama's Will and the Bushmen for current listeners by citing kindred spirits like R.E.M., N.R.B.Q. and the dB's, though this rollicking quartet's enchanting debut is no mere alphabet soup of influences, either present or past—even if the album does end in a toast to Neil Young with a Lynyrd Skynyrd chaser, blatantly titled "Neil Young." These guys make no bones about their inspirations, but influences from Big Star to the Allman Brothers are subtly threaded into a sound that recalls, if anything, the spirit of the currently-neglected Buffalo Springfield—a canny move these days, when everyone else is plundering their contemporaries, the Byrds. The Bushmen's primary singers and writers, Will Kimbrough and Sam Baylor, fashion fresh and charming pop-rock numbers from the same sturdy country-folk lumber the Springfield used, embellishing them with similarly sizzling but terse guitar jam-outs, and the slightest whiff of psychedelia. In fact, the youthful, breezy, almost naive enthusiasm pervading this set actually feels a lot like the timbre of the late-Sixties, which, here in the late-Eighties, feels effervescent and invigorating as all hell.

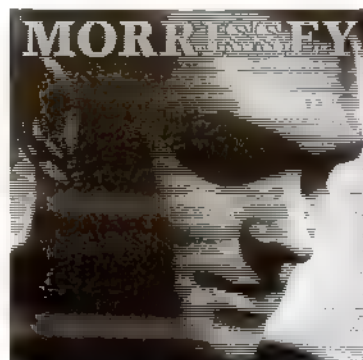
—Rob Patterson

MORRISSEY

Alone.

"Viva Hate"

The debut album from
the former lead singer
of The Smiths.



Suedehead • Alsatian Cousin • Everyday Is Like Sunday • Bengali In Platforms
Angel, Angel, Down We Go Together • Late Night, Maudlin Street
Break Up The Family • The Ordinary Boys • I Don't Mind If You Forget Me
Dial-A-Cliché • Margaret On The Guillotine • *Hairdresser On Fire

Words By Morrissey
Music by Stephen Street

SINGLES



Michael Balerkey

Column by John Leland

On August 26, 1987, Scott Sterling and four friends drove to the Highbridge Garden Homes on University Avenue in the South Bronx, where their 16-year-old friend had been harassed by some older guys over his girlfriend. When they got there, the men were gone, but Sterling spoke with some of their friends. Then, as the five interlopers sat in their Jeep, gunshots rang out from the building across the street. A day later, Scott Sterling, a.k.a. Scott LaRock, former basketball star and social worker, deejay for the rap crew Boogie Down Productions, died from bullet wounds in the head and neck. He was 25.

For the media this was a rap-related death, another demonstration of hip hop's violent side. In her moderately offensive account in the *New York Times*, Esther Iverem wrote, "Some say the tragedy illustrates how violence and the hip hop music scene seem to come together like the clapping hands at rap concerts and films," and added that "the group often portrayed or hinted at violence its audience knew too well." A week later, in his review of a large rap concert at Madison Square Garden that included a tribute to Sterling, Jim Bessman of the *New York Post* devoted more space—and energy—to crowd violence than to his perfunctory account

of the show. Reviews of rap shows now routinely include body counts; when Public Enemy recently played a peaceful party in Trenton, New Jersey, local papers announced the absence of violence as if this were news. Apparently, when hip hop music is even coincidentally involved, black-on-black violence, which papers generally ignore, becomes hot copy.

Since LaRock's death, rapper K.R.S. One, who had been one of the deejay's charges at the Franklin Armory Men's Center, has kept Boogie Down Productions going. The crew's new *By All Means Necessary* album (Jive/RCA) continues the hard-edged economy of *Criminal Minded*, and is one of several superb rap albums on the market right now. But more striking than anything on the album is a single, "Stop the Violence," by Jam Rock Massive & K.R.S. One (Massive). Boogie Down's record company denounces this as a bootleg of a demo recording, but the single's spare underproduction and relaxed pace make it more moving than the album version. It will probably disappear soon and never come back, but for now it is my favorite new record. It is also a rare, sensible look at the larger roots and implications of hip hop violence and its relationship with the media. K.R.S. One raps:

When you're in a club you come to chill out

One two three, the crew is called BDP: K.R.S. One (left) with Scott LaRock.

*Not watch someone's blood just spill out
That's what these other people want to see
Another race fight endlessly
You know we're being watched, you know we're being seen
Some wish to destroy this scene
Called hip hop, but I won't drop
Not I or Scott LaRock*

Unlike the *Times* or the *Post*, which treat the violence at rap shows as an isolated phenomenon, ignoring its social context, K.R.S. One draws it as a part of a pattern, a reflection of larger, sanctioned criminality. His logic tends to be elusive and his themes immense, but these only make "Stop the Violence" a more exciting ride. Strap on:

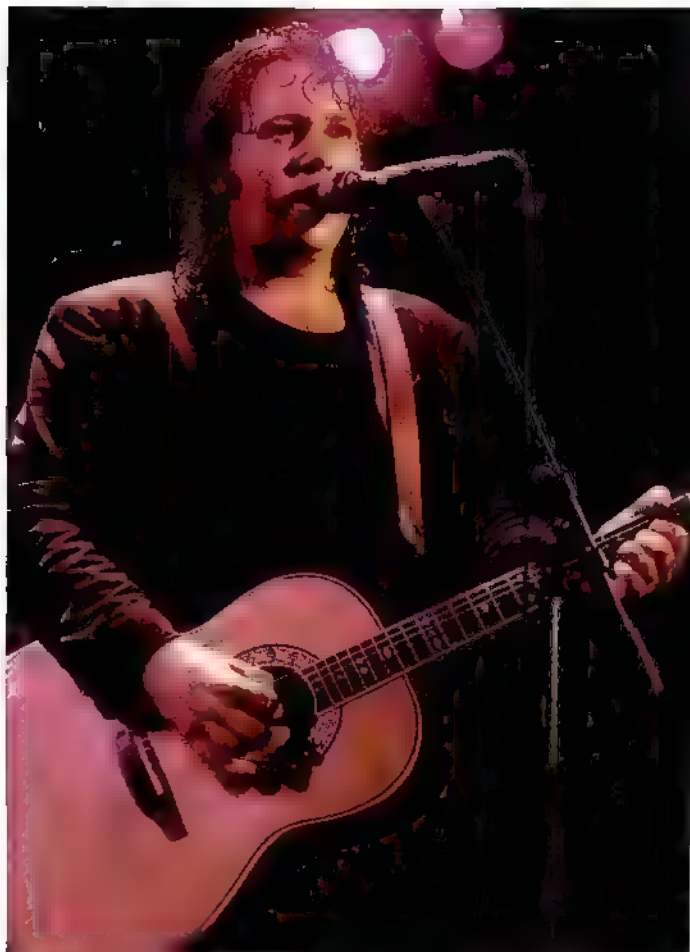
*Mary Lou just had a baby someone else decapitated
The drama of the world shouldn't keep us so frustrated
I look but it doesn't coincide with my books
Social studies will not speak upon political crooks
It's just the presidents and all the money they spend
All the things they invent and how the house is so immaculate*

*They create missiles while families eating gristle
Then they get upset when the press blows the whistle
Phone calls are made, profiles are kept low
They tamper with some jobs now the press is controlled
Not only newspapers but every single station
You only get to hear the president is on vacation
But stay calm, there's no need for alarm
You say goodbye to your mom and you're off to Vietnam
You shoot to kill and you come back a veteran
But how many veterans are out there peddling
There's no telling 'cause they continue selling
As quiet as it's kept I won't go into depth
You can talk about Nigeria, people used to laugh atcha
Now I take a look, I see USA for Africa?*

When I was a kid, I felt that one of the boldest things about rock 'n' roll was its contempt for the word, the way it buried lyrics under mounds of noise (and I mean the Beatles and Tommy James and the Cowbells here, not the Stooges). My parents heard this too, but were not as excited by it. Since then, I've felt a certain softness, compromise, in music that put words out front, as if the calculated order of the words tempered the chaos. People like Dylan, Captain Beefheart, or Talking Heads got around this with a kind of literary chaos. But Spoonie Gee was the first really to conquer it; leaping unpredictably from subject to subject, he offered thematic chaos. And as much as I admire the insights of "Stop the Violence," the most radical thing about the rap seems not to be the themes but the chaotic logic that binds them.

THE A-LIST:

EU, "Da Butt" (Manhattan)
Boogie Down Productions, "My Philosophy" (Jive/RCA)
Biz Markie, "Biz Is Goin' Off" (Cold Chillin'/Warner)
Super Lover Cee & Casanova Rud, "Super-Casanova" (DNA International)
Masters of Ceremony, "The Master Move" (4th & B'way/Island)
MC Lyte, "10% Dis" (First Priority/Atlantic)
Life-n-Def, "Gettin' Money" (Casanova)
Kev-E-Kev & Ak-B, "Listen to the Man" (DNA International)
Jazzy Jeff and Fresh Prince, "Parents Just Don't Understand" (Jive/RCA)
Chubb Rock, "DJ Innovator" (Select)
Divine Force, "My Uptown Beat" b/w "Ain't We Funky Now" (Yamak-Ka)



Anthony Colapier



Anthony Colapier

UNDERGROUND

The Saints,
Eugene Chadbourne's
cooking tips,
Kim Gordon on
bloody pulp fiction,
Baboon Dooley.

Column by
Byron Coley



This past year there's been a lotta revisionist hepster thinking re: a pudgy, hairless tuneworm named Reg Something-or-other. Better known as Elton John, this butt-ball's resurgence has almost nothing to do with his own activities. It is a result, rather, of swinging college disc-jockeys' embracement of the most recent *Saints* LP, *All Fool's Day* (TV Tunes). This is the band's first U.S. release in nearly a decade, and as young know-it-alls listen to the bittersweet whoop of vocalist Chris Bailey, they can't help but think of Mr. John and his second golden era. Those sweet arrangements, those breathy ballads. Where's Bernie Taupin?

Bernie Taupin is dead and in a box for all I know. And they might as well feed old Elton to the maggots too, y'know? A friend of mine claims that *Caribou* is a classic, but I'd rather be stuck on a desert island with John

Rockwell and some Linda Ronstadt album than actually have to make up my own mind about such a simpy topic. Still, I like *All Fool's Day* a whole lot more than I probably oughta. A large part of that has to do with the fact that an Australian band called the Saints has jammed a big fork in my forehead on more than one occasion. But Jesus, it wasn't always a fork marked "Elton." Lemme tell ya about it.

In the beginning there was a single called "I'm Stranded." It was one of the greatest singles you ever heard, but we're not talking about singles here, we're talking albums. Luckily, *I'm Stranded* was also an LP. Released here in 1977 by Sire and by other companies all 'round the world,

Chris Bailey (left) and Barrington Francis (right) of the Saints.

it is perhaps the finest, solidest punk album of all. There isn't a tune on it that even approaches stinkerhood. Ed Kuepper's guitar-lines are a perfect cross between Eddie Cochran and Johnny Ramone, Bailey's vocals an ideal mix of snot, speed, and booze. This mother soars.

The second Saints album, *Eternally Yours*, has just been reissued by Fan Club Records in France and should be fairly available. It's a monster too. Kuepper's horn section enters via the awesome "Know Your Product," Bailey begins to wrap his throat around a couple of ballads, the speed prerequisites begin to fall by the wayside, and the mushily melodic inventions are top flight. Metal Mike Saunders once declared that this was the only album that deserved to have a lyric sheet, and he wasn't far from wrong.

The band's third album, *Prehistoric Sounds* (Fan Club reissue), was recorded in England, shortly before the original lineup's dissolution. A number of people think it may be the best album to've come from Australia ever. It takes all of the evolution hinted at on *Eternally Yours* and turns it into a full-blown post-punk flourish. Kuepper's horn charts are amazing—easily the definitive rock tooting extant up to that time. The guitars tend to jangle in a groovy pre-cliché way, and Bailey tries his hand at solo composition (everything up to here had been authored or co-authored by Kuepper). It's a good thing he was able to swing it.

The Saints as Australia knew them never returned from the UK. Kuepper went on to lead a series of bands under the Laughing Clowns rubric (a saga I'll deal with some other time). Algy Ward joined the Damned. Ivor Hay started the Wildlife Documentaries. A compilation of tracks by this first generation lineup, *Best of the Saints* (Razor import), contains quite a few of their best tracks, including the rare "Do the Robot" (only otherwise available on an English 12-inch). If you're too lazy to shop for the real goods, it'll do.

Anyway, after the collapse, Bailey put together a new Saints with Janine Hall of the Young Charlatans and a pair of British beer fans. Their first record was a mini-LP, *Paralytic Tonight Dublin Tomorrow* (New Rose import). Using a more standard rock band format (i.e., without horns and Kuepper's chord-sense), the record's a boozy, hard-edged look at misplaced romanticism. Bailey once referred to it as his diary of being "down and out in England and Europe." It's a solid piece of trout.

Back in Sydney in '80, the same basic lineup recorded an album called *The Monkey Puzzle* (Lost, Australian import). And while this contains the gorgeously-plucked "Let's Pretend," it's a transitional record. This is where Bailey's voice really starts shifting to the fore as an instru-



ment and the settings aren't quite strong enough to make it work.

Something similar could be said of 1982's *Casablanca* LP (Lost—also released in England and France under the title *Out in the Jungle*). Recording in England, the band was basically down to a trio at this point and Bailey was trying to work horn parts back into the songs. The most successful tracks are two clamorous workouts with guest guitarist Brian James. The rest is less gripping.

Still not sure what he wanted to do, Bailey again busted up the Saints and recorded two solo efforts. The first was an unauthorized set of demos recorded in Paris and also called *Casablanca* (New Rose). With a raw semi-electric sound somewhere between Johnny Thunders's early Eighties solo work, Nikki Sudden's smack-pop, and Mike Wilhelm's pre-Flaming Groovies outings, it features nascent,

skeletal takes on Saints songs-to-be and other shit that'll bring a drop of salty dew to the rim of any burn-out's hole.

Bailey's second solo effort, *What We Did on Our Holidays* (New Rose), is an uneven collection supposedly recorded on tour in Australia in 1983. There are unsatisfying soul covers done with a band I guess he didn't call the Saints, some basic roots rockers, and more of the decent solo angst-fretting. All in all it didn't bode real well. Thankfully, it did not bode true.

1984's *A Little Madness to Be Free* (New Rose and Australian RCA) was the first real evidence of Bailey's Eltonian potential, and it has some real high points. Oddly, the best track from the sessions—a fuzzy mesh of horns, guitars, and thoroughly indecipherable vocals called "Heavy Metal"—is only on the French version of the LP. Much of the rest should be pretty pleasing to those who dig *All Fool's Day*. Apart from a couplea duds that sound like outtakes from a Mr. Acker Bilk album, this is sophisto pop at its drudgy finest.

Next came a tired and miserable live record, *Live in a Mud Hut* (New Rose). It has a lotta good songs of the Saints' third period, but the sound has about as much oomph as a log. Dire.

Which brings us back around to *All Fool's Day*. Recorded in '85, this one's a classy pop effort that's worthy of your attention. Even the most hardcore Caribou boosters I know say it's as good as the best Elton John record ever. Dig the heck in.

Zeena Parkins, of Skeleton Crew and News From Babel fame, is my favorite living harpist. That she's the only one I can name is immaterial. Parkins approaches the enormous instrument the way that Fred Frith or Hans Reichel might, and the clipped clumps of melody and kucks of sonic gristle that she pulls from it are dandy as jack. Recorded with the help of a doughty *moderne* crew (Tom Cora, Wayne Horvitz, Ikue Mori and others), Parkins's first LP under her own name is a collection of solo, duo, and trio selections called *Something Out There* (No Man's Land import, available through New Music Distribution Service, 500 Broadway, NY, NY 10012). The sound can be as focused as Randall's electric guitar attack or as diffuse as one of Chadbourne's early experimental passages. A truly ginchy exploration of forgotten string potential.

The best first chirp I've heard in a long time is the debut album by *Scrawl*. I don't know if they've worked any Shaggs material into their set yet (as they promised when I saw 'em play in New York), but this female trio from Ohio will probably hold my interest even if they never bend one of the Wiggins sisters' clas-

sics to their will. The album's called *Plus, Also, Too* (No Other, 1992 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43201), and it's jammed to the dug-tip with wild, naïf, non-generic garage-choot. Sometimes the sound slides down to just bass-blit plus cussing vox, at other times it showcases the band smashing each of their three instruments in extreme earnest. You'll find yourself singing along to such tunes as "Sad" and "I Can't Relax" before you've even heard them. Extremely boss and potentially populist too. Ya can't lose.

Daved Hild has long been the finest linebucker to tinker in the avant-garage, but his acclaim has been real slow in coming. His first band, the Girls, died before anybody was able to figure out what they were about; their posthumous album only slithered out seven years after their demise. His next band, the Farmers, primarily a duo with Roger Miller, never released so much as a peep. Nor did any of the units Hild worked with once he relocated to New York. His presence certainly helped shape David Thomas's *Monster Walks the Winter Lake* LP, but most people didn't notice. But now, in concord with Ralph Carney and Mark Kramer, Hild can bang a drum that's pretty recognizably his own. *On Happiness Finally Came to Them* (Shimmy Disc, available through NMDS) Daved's voice is still the huge hiccupping machine it's always been, a presence with the surrealist potential of a steroid-packed Wildman Fischer. And while the credits list the songs as mutual compositions, it's easy to detect Daved's distinctive mark on the material. Good-humored anarcho-pop weirdness with a forehead big enough to bruise you badly. The record is a wild pastiche of all your



favorite New York post-moves, with stellar guest appearances by the likes of Michael Cudahy. Don't you be a lawnmower. Buy one today and see.

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UNDERGROUND

Kim Gordon's Bookshelf: James Elroy

Okay. If you went to see this movie called *Cop* and thought you blew it, you're probably right. And you'll never know what the story really is, all the groovy stuff they couldn't put in, because you're never gonna pick up a book and read, laze brain. That's why books now fall into the underground's domain. Reading has become confined to skim publications, such as this one, and computer manuals. So let me give you a taste of what you missed.

Sergeant Lloyd Hopkins, the hulky protagonist of *Cop*, is a godlike dude: sensitive and brutal, empty and abused, powerful yet trapped. He is the protector and avenger of the innocence of women, so zealous that he

becomes a machine of death and killing. He believes that his soul, his own innocence, is bathed in the blood of his first righteous kill—a fellow National Guardsman who was blasting blacks to death during the Watts riots. The script for *Cop* was modeled on *Blood on the Moon*, by James Elroy.

Elroy is a fiery genius from hell. His most recent novel, *The Black Dahlia*, is the most violent book I've ever read. All his novels are full of sexual emotional tension, portrayed with such a high level of realism that you not only enjoy the read, but also want to rub your body all over the pages.

KIM: When you do a book like *Silent Terror* (the diary of a serial killer), how do you come up with the characters?

JAMES: For *Silent Terror* I put together a lot of the salient features of the serial killer psyche and just let my imagination run amok. Serial killers are usually WASPy guys of above average intelligence and disproportionately homosexual. So I put that, that, that

with the other thing and gave him some of my own life experiences. I worked in a porno bookstore in L.A. back in the late Sixties, for instance, and caddied. Once you know something about something like that you can just go with it. The only limits are your imagination.

KIM: What are your hobbies?

JAMES: Um...

KIM: You have a dog, right?

JAMES: No.

KIM: You don't?

JAMES: I am the dog. Mostly I listen to music and lie around on my bed brooding on things. Sex is my big obsession. I think about it all the time. I turned 40 a couple days ago and I think about it more now than when I was 16. And I thought about it a lot then. I'm always curious about people and their sexuality. It's a big focal point in my characters. You read *Clandestine*, the guy's a compulsive woman-chaser. Lloyd Hopkins is a compulsive woman chaser.

KIM: How do you view yourself as a writer?

JAMES: I'm a major American writer. KIM: I agree. It seems that America's real contribution to world literature has been through mystery and pulp.

JAMES: Yep. Crime fiction, jazz, and rock 'n' roll. That's it.

KIM: You're working on a book now.

JAMES: Finished. It'll be out in September. It's called *The Big Nowhere*. The *Black Dahlia* was L.A., '47-'49; this book is L.A., '50. It's about the Red Scare and has a lot of jazz stuff in it.

KIM: What period of jazz are you into?

JAMES: I'm really obsessed with big bands. Beethoven's my favorite musician in the entire world if you really wanna go back to the greats. After that, Duke Ellington.

KIM: How about Sun Ra?

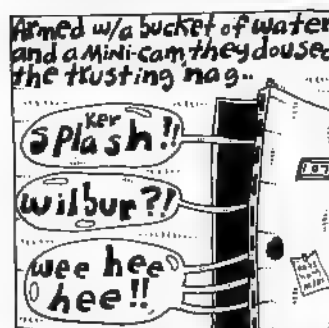
JAMES: What's that?

KIM: He's from Saturn.

JAMES: Crazy, daddio.

—Kim Gordon

Baboon Dooley Rock Critic: Tells the tale of the tragic humiliation of famed Equine Rock Critic M.R. EDDY!



© 1988 John Crawford

UNDERGROUND

In the Kitchen with Dr. Eugene Chadbourne

This month's specialty: A Burrito
Platter That Will Make Racists Shit

INGREDIENTS:

- one huge bag green peppers
- several medium bags of any other available peppers
- one small bag green tomatoes
- a few pounds cheese (jack, mozzarella, softened cheddar)
- two large cans refried beans
- one large head lettuce, shredded
- several tomatoes, sliced
- two cans jalapeño peppers, drained and sliced
- two large onions, diced
- one dozen tortillas (fresh, please)
- one dozen eggs, scrambled (optional)
- six medium potatoes, boiled and fried (optional)

BEFORE YOU START:

Go to the nearest farmer's market early Saturday morning. Search the stands for the best—the hottest, the tastiest, the strangest—locally-grown hot peppers. Green ones will be for the green sauce; any other colors will go into a lethal mix known as "Love Sauce."

Don't be concerned about which of the farmers might be secret members of the KKK, the Aryan Nation, the National Brotherhood for Racial Purity, the Nazi Party, or the White Patriot Party. You can't judge anyone on his or her appearance. (But didn't that last man smirk strangely when you mentioned that you were buying ingredients for homemade Mexican food? "Ain't too many Mexicans around here," he said.)

It's true. There aren't many Mexicans in North Carolina and it's too bad. They would add more heart and vitality to the community than this bunch of blue-eyed, blonde-haired, pasty-faced, wishy-washy Aryan Baptists does.

In their quest for racial purity, would these "necks" support an all-out "back to wherever you came from!" movement? With no excuses this time? All European immigrants back to Europe; blacks back to Africa; all Jews out of Israel and back to Europe; nobody allowed in North America except those of Mexican or Indian descent?

Oh well, no reason to pull up stakes just yet. And when there's cause for a bunch of us to get together (perhaps to celebrate an outstanding accomplishment by the Rake) we like a quick and lavish feast that's short in preparation time. One favorite is this platter, named after those in the community who see the burrito's possible ascendancy over the hot dog as a cause for racial tension.

STEP ONE:

Start two pots of water boiling when you get home. Gather up your peppers and a small bagful of green tomatoes (which are cheap, and famous for their ability to bring on bowel movements so massive and

malodorous that the racial purity movement smells like a rose in comparison). Everything green goes in one pot, all the colored peppers go in another. If you want to be nice, remove a lot of the seeds. If you want people's lips to sting with pain, leave them in.

STEP TWO:

While everything is boiling, gather together and prepare roughly equal parts of ingredients such as cheese, beans, onions, lettuce, tomato, peppers, whatever. Some people like to add scrambled egg and potato, which are essential for the so-called "Breakfast Burrito" (named by the West Coast jazz musicians who eat them for breakfast at 4:00 a.m.).

STEP THREE:

Line up everything along a counter. Now take out the tortillas (and let's hope you either have friends near a Mexican market or that you've recently traveled to one yourself, so that you have packages of real tortillas as opposed to Kroger tortillas). Soften up the tortillas for a few minutes by placing them in a low oven (not over 200 degrees). Remove when easily pliable and turn the oven up to 350.

STEP FOUR:

On a large cooking tray, begin rolling up the tortillas with all the ingredients you have on hand. Use a can of beans as a bookend to keep the tortillas tightly rolled while you are adding them to the tray. They will want to unravel and spread their contents all over the place, so you must fight this unpleasant tendency.

The pepper sauces can be spread inside the tortilla before it's rolled. Then, for added bite, spoon whatever sauce remains directly over the rolled up tortillas before you put them in the oven.

STEP FIVE:

Cook everything at 350 degrees for a while. When it smells like it's ready to eat, it is.

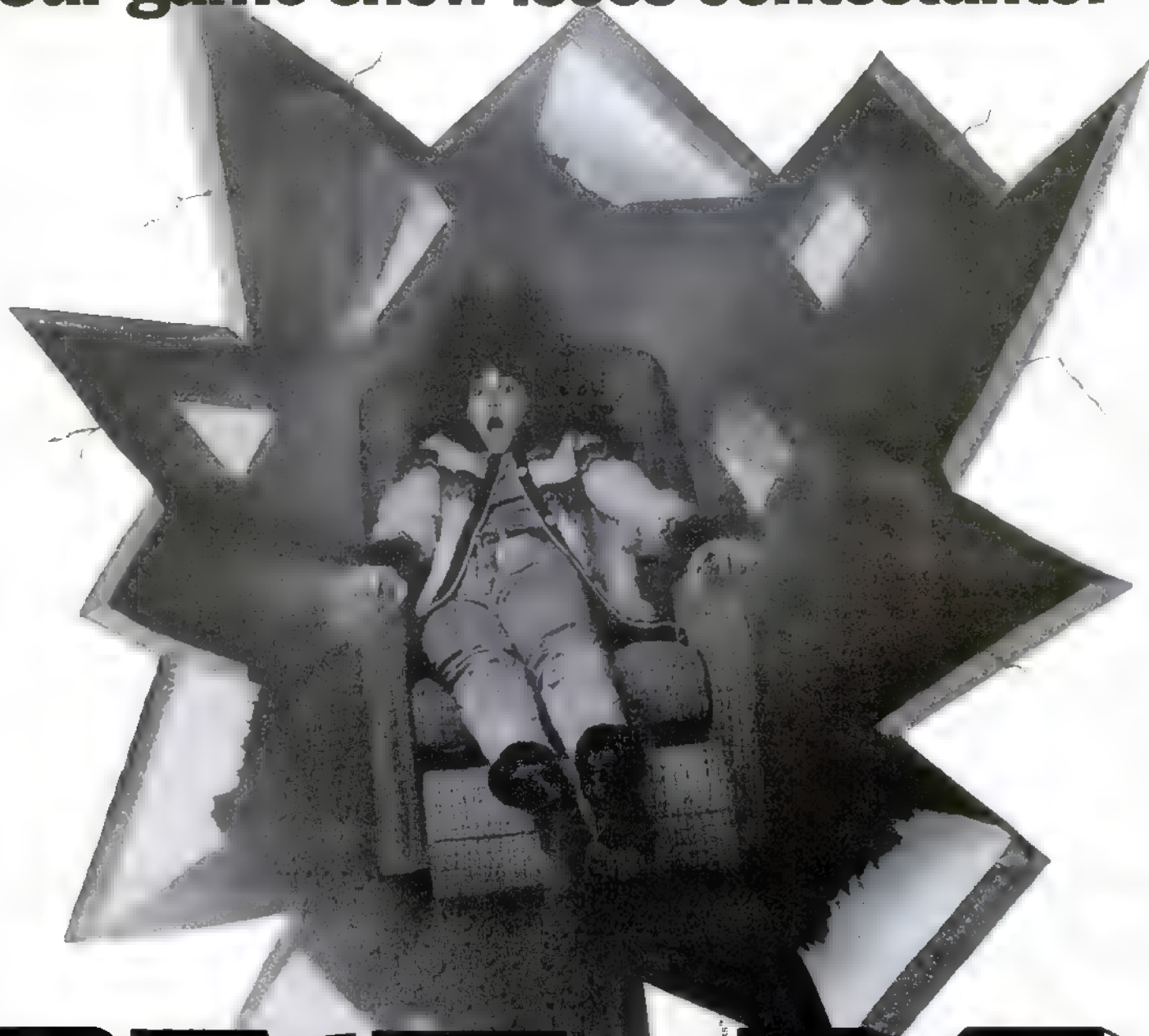
SERVING SUGGESTION:

If a known member of one of the aforementioned racist groups is indeed coming to dine, make up a batch of green sauce in advance. Put it in a jar and let it go bad somewhere like a cupboard or cellar. Even in a fridge, fresh green sauce won't last long. And just a whiff when you unseal the jar is toxic. If you can get one of these guys to eat a burrito made with rotten green sauce, I guarantee they will be up puking into the wee hours. Almost as if they'd finally looked deep into the bowels of their own rotten philosophy.



Mike Smith

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DAYS OF GUNS N' ROSES

Article by Bill Holdship
Photography by Robert John

In which our reporter discovers that L.A.'s reputed bad boys are good-bad, but they're not evil.

If you don't know better, you'll swear that Guns N' Roses are just another band from that L.A. metal scene, trying to be the newest and sleaziest party badasses on the block, hoping eventually to form a corporation so they can buy shopping malls and stuff—and not knowing a decent rock 'n' roll riff if it comes and hits them in the face. Before I moved to L.A., over a year ago, the hype machine had already been running full-throttle for Guns N' Roses, and although I couldn't have told you anything about the band's music at the time, it wasn't hard to figure out that the cover of their debut LP, *Appetite for Destruction*, had managed to offend lots of people with its rape imagery (so much so that Geffen released a second cover). If that wasn't enough, two of the members were arrested in Hollywood on rape charges, and rumors flew accusing them of being nearly everything from junkies to child molesters. Yep, sounds like all the things that made me fall in love with rock 'n' roll in the first place.

Of course, word was filtering up from the street about them as well. When the band played a huge benefit concert with an all-star heavy metal ensemble dubbed "The Party Ninjas," they reportedly blew everyone else off the stage. When Alice Cooper recently played in Long Beach, three members of GN'R joined him onstage for the encore, "Under My Wheels," which was said to be the only real highlight of the entire show. (Cooper subsequently took the band into the studio to re-record the song.) Of course, none of this may sound like any big deal, considering the competition, but then I ran into this guy I know who was leaving a party early so he could see Guns N' Roses play. "I didn't know you liked heavy metal," I said. (I mean, this guy's favorite band of all time is Mission of Burma.) "Guns N' Roses aren't heavy metal," he replied.

"Believe me, they aren't."

And you know something? He was right. Oh, sure, *Appetite for Destruction* seems socially irresponsible, sexist, and totally reprehensible at times. But you know what else? The music is great. These guys wear their influences on their sleeves like a banner—and all the influences are obviously there, not just Aerosmith, Led Zep, early Alice Cooper, and Black Sabbath, but also the Dolls, Stones, Ramones, Cheap Trick, Iggy, and the Pistols, as well as Bo Diddley, whose classic riff creates GN'R's "Mr. Brownstone." These guys have been known to dust off "Heartbreak Hotel" or "Jumpin' Jack Flash" for live performances. The dual lead guitars of Slash and Izzy Stradlin are much more interested in playing melodies and rock 'n' roll riffs than demonstrating their Eddie Van Halenisms—and they're both pretty incredible as a result. The rhythm team of bassist Duff McKagan and drummer Steven Adler has obviously listened to stuff like the MC5 somewhere along the way. And lead singer/band focal point W. Axl Rose—Axl, for short—is a man of more voices than any hard rock singer in recent memory. This is a record that may actually make you want to play air guitar again.

Something else is different about Guns N' Roses. Although their songs are about the decadence one associates with Hollywood, there also seems to be a strange moralistic overtone to some of them. Or at least a song like "Welcome to the Jungle" reflects what the porno scene around that newsstand I frequent really feels like more than any song I can think of. Guns N' Roses seem to be writing about the things they see in the city, but they don't necessarily glamorize. "Mr. Brownstone" can be interpreted as much an anti-heroin song as it can be pro, and, hell, you can say the same thing about the Vel-



vet's Underground's "Heroin." Even the excesses that are celebrated in "It's So Easy" seem to be delivered with a passive indifference. A steady diet of decadence can get pretty boring, or worse. And lyrics like "Take me down to Paradise City, where the grass is green and girls are pretty" aren't exactly your standard celebration of sleaze, while some of Axl's love songs ("Sweet Child O' Mine," "Rocket Queen") reveal a beating heart beneath the hardcore exterior. And besides, if they really are a bunch of scumbags... well, we didn't stop listening to "Paint It Black" just because Keith Richards stuck spikes in his veins.

Still, there is this image and reputation that have to be dealt with. People at Warner Brothers, the band's parent label, wrote them nasty letters about the offensive album cover. These guys even have a bad reputation among their peers, and can't get on



certain tours as a result. AC/DC did offer them an opening slot, but wanted to hold their pay as security for three weeks, and then planned to kick them off the tour at the end of the grace period; they declined the offer. The organizers of this summer's forthcoming "Monsters of Rock" extravaganza (featuring Van Halen, Judas Priest, Metallica, etc.) wouldn't have any part of Guns. "I mean, what am I going to do?" asks guitarist Slash, whose eyes make only rare appearances from beneath his Joey Ramone-like bush of hair. "Get the bassist from Van Halen or Judas Priest strung out on something? We're just a bunch of kids, you know."

Three of these kids—Slash, Izzy, and Duff—are sitting in a quiet Mexican restaurant on Sunset Boulevard, conversing with an older dude who likes their music but doesn't understand their image. (Axl, maintaining his mysterious veneer, isn't

here for this session, though he has promised to call later.) They've been in and out of bands since age 14, which was approximately ten years ago. None of them are originally from L.A., though Slash moved here from England with his parents years ago. Axl and Izzy both migrated from Indiana, while Duff hails from Seattle. The band formed to play a \$50 gig in that latter city three years ago—after hitchhiking across the desert subsequent to their car breaking down—and carried on from that point. A year later they were signed, and—lacking a manager—proceeded to negotiate their own contract, a most uncommon occurrence in this biz. They claim to be a real band in that they're all the best of friends, create everything together as a joint effort, and really concentrate on their music. And—I hate to blow any illusions here, but—they're nice guys ("You're not going to print that,

are you?" one of their publicists asked the morning after)... or at least they're putting on a hell of an act for me. Sure, they like to drink a lot, but then so do the Replacements and Dean Martin.

So why the "bad boys" rap?

"I don't know," says Slash. "Because we drink and do whatever, and we're just basically real people to the point that I think it almost offends other people."

"I'm immediately embarrassed when that image comes up," says Duff. "A lot of bands go, 'Good, we got the bad boy title this week,' but with us, it's like we're just a rock 'n' roll band. A lot of things go

Guns N' Roses, victims of L.A.'s rug culture: (L-R) Steven Adler, Izzy Stradlin, W. Axl Rose, Slash, Duff McKagan.



along with that that we take full advantage of at times. We were doing all that stuff before we were in the band, though. We didn't try to create any kind of image. It was created for us. Decadence was laid on this band..."

"Well, some of those early parties were pretty brash," laughs Izzy.

"You've heard some of those old Stones stories, right?" asks Slash. "It was sort of the epitome of that. The thing is we don't take shit from people, and we've never conformed to anybody else's standards, and most of the people we had to deal with at the time, we'd tell, 'Fuck you.' So it was like 'Oh, my God!'"

"But it wasn't a bratty thing," Duff explains. "It's just what we were used to, but the industry and record company weren't."

"If I remember correctly, they wanted to drop us at one point," says Izzy. "About a year after they signed us."

Slash: "Well, what happened is, we got restless. We get signed, they give us a bunch of money, put us in an apartment, we can't go out and do any gigs—so we fucking got bored, and started doing a lot of drugs, drinking a lot, tearing up houses. We had \$7500 apiece—which was unheard of for us..."

Izzy: "We partied hard for about two weeks."

Slash: "And just about every single manager that we met was scared shitless of us. And it was bad. We couldn't help it. We were bored. So we started to fuck up. But we finally got it together and gave them what they wanted."

Izzy: "So now they all love us."

What about the rape charges?

Slash: "That was no big deal. What happened is Axl and me were with these two girls, and they got in a sexual situation and they decided to file rape charges. Me and Axl had to borrow suits one day to go down to the police station and turn ourselves in over this crap—and when it came down to the wire, they dropped the charges because it was all bogus. We didn't fucking do anything to them."

Izzy: "It turned out that our drummer had fucked one of their mothers, so it was a complicated story."

Do they feel an association with the metal scene?

Izzy: "We have metal guitar strings. That's the only similarity we have."

Slash: "It's like this new cliché to say, 'We're not a heavy metal band. We're a rock 'n' roll band.'"

Poison and everyone are saying it, so I can't even say that anymore. But the truth of the matter is when rock 'n' roll was young and stuff, the bands were real, the people were real and sincere—the only thing that was fucked up was the business itself. But now to sell, bands conform to what the record company wants, and the magazines are conforming to what's selling, so they get together to create like this whole bullshit fad. I mean, you look at it, and just go, 'Fuck, it's so unreal.' I mean, obviously we're a product of what we've grown up with, regardless of what it is. But it's scary because the next generation of rock 'n' roll—it's already getting to be this way—is going to be a bunch of morons, because these bands aren't doing anything with it that's interesting or even educational on a rock 'n' roll level. It's all garbage.

"I mean, you can't be a rock 'n' roll band, and only have your roots go back five years. What the fuck is that? As a result, now we have bands like Kingdom Come, and their Led Zeppelin—"

Izzy: "Regurgitation."

The most ironic thing about this interview is that these guys ended up being really likeable, Johnny Thunders fetishes and all. They're passionate about certain music that I once felt that way about, and they're awfully non-jaded for all their worldliness. And all indications pointed to them being incredible assholes...

Duff: "What sticks in the back of my head most of the time when I do interviews is why would anybody want to know about me and what ticks inside my head. I don't understand that because it's just a rock 'n' roll band. We're just playing."

Slash: "In the general scheme of things, us and other bands are pretty insignificant when you look at the rest of the world. And for bands to think that they're the center of the universe just makes me sick. Basically, rock 'n' roll is like an aphrodisiac for people who have everyday jobs and shit, and

"We didn't try to create any kind of image. It was created for us. Decadence was laid on this band."



Nice guys, really: Slash (above) and Steven Adler (right).

their one stab at total freedom and anarchy and whatever is to listen to rock 'n' roll. But if we faded out tomorrow and Guns N' Roses faded out tomorrow, no one's really going to give a shit [everyone laughs]."

Duff: "Also, it's like we've played some big places, and all the people are going nuts, and we'll look at each other, and it's like, 'What is this all about?' And then doing interviews and stuff, people will get really serious and in your face—so you'll get back in their face, 'Why would you want to know this? This is ridiculous.' And maybe it's a band that's different than the ones that have come along in awhile, which I think we are. But, then again, to get so into it, and to think that you are..."

Izzy: "...It..."

Duff: "... and something like the Persian Gulf doesn't matter..." As I said, very likeable.

A PHONE CALL FROM AXL

So I'm told you're out of control.

"Me? Well, out of their control, maybe."

Do you think the record company has you manufacturing rebellion?

"It's kind of weird, because we are just being ourselves, but at the same time, these 'bad boy' images tend to sell. So it's being capitalized on, and I think the industry may not know how to deal with it because they've been dealing with bands as a package for years. But then there are bands that profess some type of image that they live and lead, but it's not something that they actually do. They're more apt to stay home. I stay home a lot just so I don't go out and get on a roll that I don't want to necessarily lead me to wherever it may."

Heavy metal?

"We like a lot of forms of music. What came out on that record are songs we've written that we've had the most fun with. We don't consider it heavy metal, but hard rock. We recently did two shows in Anaheim in which we did some country-type stuff, and it went over really well. We've got acoustic stuff ready for the next record, and I think we'll have a pretty broad range of stuff to give the public—but it won't be lacking the loud guitars because that's something I'm a fan of. Right now, like my favorite songs are 'Man In The Mirror' by Michael Jackson and 'Fab' by George Harrison—so I try to stay open to all kinds of stuff. It's not cool in the rock 'n' roll world to like George Michael, but he's done some great stuff on this last record."

On "It's So Easy":

"It is. If you want to like disappear for a while, and then get back into the scene a little bit, you're back in the first night out, whether you want to be or not. It's already there—200 people in your face with this and that. 'Come and do some blow, I've got some heroin...' You can choose to do it, and if you don't, it's kind of weird. But it can get a little depressing."

On responsibility:

"It kind of surprised me to see so many kids coming to the show. Nothing against kids, but we didn't write our songs with anyone in mind really other than the people we were writing them about and the Hollywood scene. And in Hollywood, most of the clubs were 21 and over, so we weren't really writing for the younger kids. I'm not encouraging a 13-year-old kid to go and do drugs. We're just writing about something that happened in our life. It's

strange that's who comes to the concerts and stuff, and I wonder where all the older people are, but, then again, they go to Bruce Springsteen concerts because I'm not writing about the things he writes about. I'm not writing about having a job in the Midwest and stuff."


Other fab facts: He writes about "things that really happened"; his steady girlfriend (the subject of "Sweet Child O' Mine") is famed brother Don Everly's daughter; he plays piano; and he started singing in church at the age of five but never wanted to be a singer because he didn't like his voice.

And the notorious album cover? "It was a postcard called 'Appetite for Destruction' I found and submitted as a joke, and the other guys liked it. I'd originally seen it in a book, and I liked the artwork because I'm a fan of those underground, strange, X-rated comics. And it got turned into us condoning rape and stuff."

"I can't believe everyone made such a big deal out of a postcard," says Izzy.

Slash cons me into driving him and his girlfriend home (he actually lives in a Travelodge motel) to Hermosa Beach. He tells me that, being naive at first to celebrity status ("We used to have to look for drugs, now people force them on us"), he eventually had to move outside of Hollywood just to keep things under control. He gets me lost on the California freeways for over two hours. "I'm really sorry, man. I'm always wasted when I leave Hollywood, so I forget." We both agree that almost every song on the heavy metal station that's playing sounds alike, and that Judas Priest's "Johnny B. Goode" doesn't sound anything like Chuck Berry.


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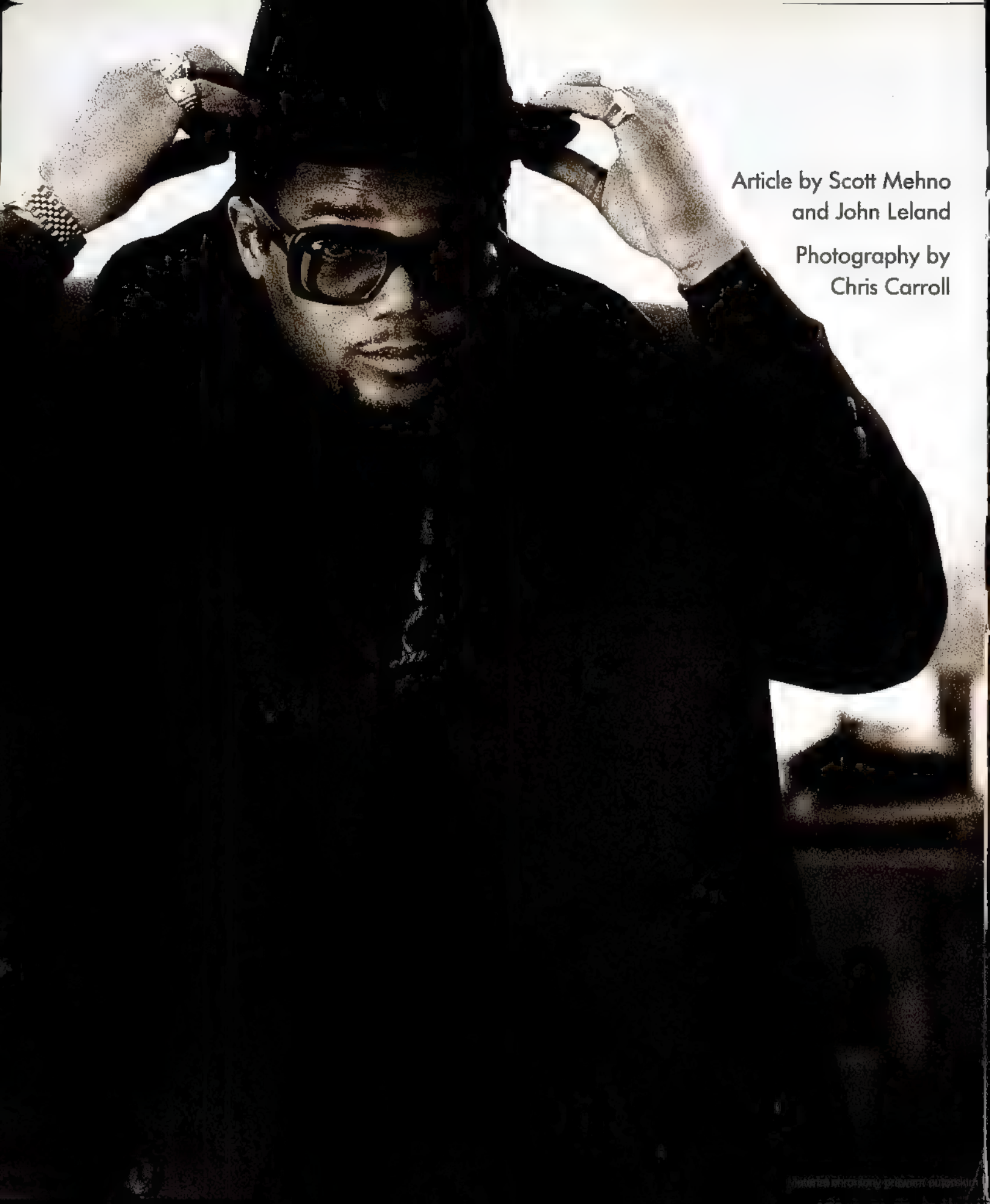
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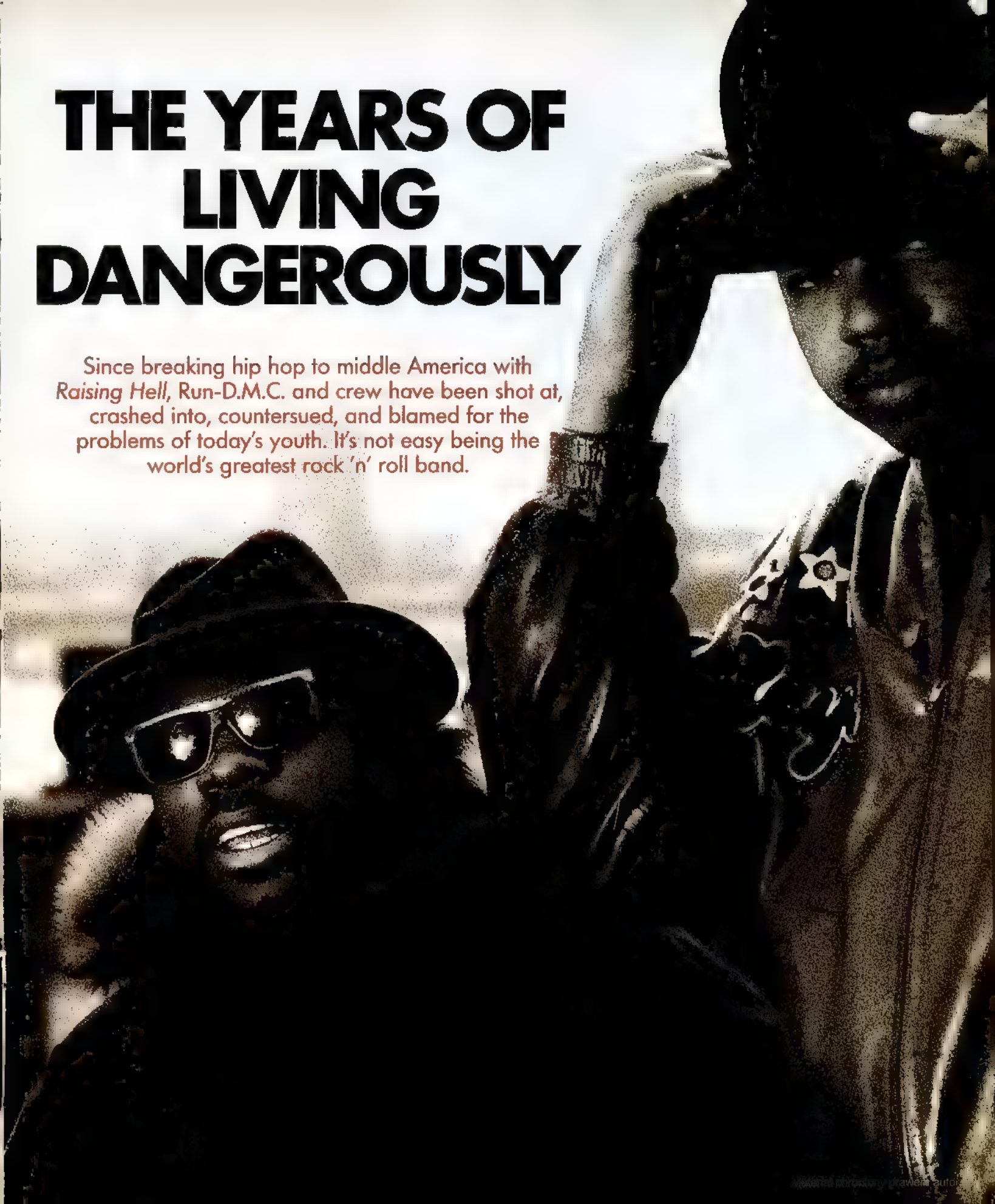


Article by Scott Mehno
and John Leland

Photography by
Chris Carroll

THE YEARS OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY

Since breaking hip hop to middle America with *Raising Hell*, Run-D.M.C. and crew have been shot at, crashed into, countersued, and blamed for the problems of today's youth. It's not easy being the world's greatest rock 'n' roll band.





When the car wasn't at the airport to pick them up, they figured something might be wrong. It was Saturday, November 21, of last year, and Run-DMC. were in Raleigh, North Carolina, to play a homecoming concert at Shaw University. The show had been inadequately promoted, and ticket sales were disappointing. At the Dorton Arena on the North Carolina State Fairground, the rappers found that the promoter hadn't supplied the backstage provisions they'd agreed upon. More significantly, he was having financial problems: He'd come up with the group's front money, but couldn't fulfill the rest of the contract. Refusing to perform, Run-DMC. and their road crew returned to their hotel.

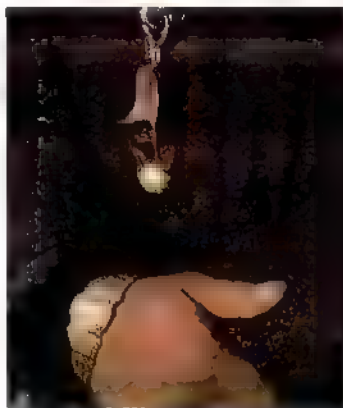
A few minutes later, a group of Shaw students and fans who'd followed the group over from the arena filled the 14th floor hallway of the Radison Plaza Hotel. At first the two factions talked. The fans blamed Run-DMC. for the cancelled concert. Then fists started to fly. The rappers, with the help of technical director Garfield McDonald and the rest of their stage crew, drove the fans back into the elevators. The elevator doors closed, then opened again. When they did, a man raised a pistol and shot Garfield McDonald in the head. The man fled; McDonald spent Thanksgiving at Wake Medical Center. The bullet had pierced his skull and bruised his brain. When he checked out a week later, he had no lingering ill effects from the wound, not even a headache.

A little over a month later, Christmas night, Jam-Master Jay (Jason Mizell), Run-DMC.'s deejay, was driving in his Jeep with two friends from the rap crew Serious-Lee-Fine, when a car coming in the opposite direction swerved into their lane. Jay jerked the Jeep to the side to avoid the oncoming car, but the other driver mirrored his move. The two cars hit head-on, throwing Jay through the windshield of the Jeep. He survived the accident with cuts and minor bruises.

For Run-DMC., the world's greatest rock 'n' roll

"I wish I could just sell the records from my door, and put the money in the safe, and give D and Jay their cut—forget the whole business."

band, these have been the tough years, the years of living dangerously. The joke in their camp now is that you have to be willing to face death in order to sign on. Since releasing *Raising Hell* two years ago, the group has been denounced by Pittsburgh's Public Safety Director John Norton as being "ruinous to the morals of our young people," and accused, by Tipper Gore of the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC), of making music that



"says it's okay to beat people up." Even rapper Kurtis Blow, with whom Run (Joseph Simmons) had started out (as the Son of Kurtis Blow), said that "What Run-DMC. is doing is perpetrating [a fraud], acting like they're tough gangster kids when they're not. And the kids see Run acting that way, so they try to be gangsters."

At a Halloween, 1986, anti-crack concert at Madison Square Garden in New York, the audience that applauded David Crosby's war on drugs hurled insults and obscenities at Run-DMC. And in Paris, where an audience of punk rockers spat on the group and eventually shouted racial slurs, a concert turned into a fight between the rappers, their entourage, and members of the audience.

These have been the years of success and frustration, two years of being partly on hold. *Raising Hell* broke into the Top 10 and sold over three million copies; after the collaboration with Aerosmith on



"Walk This Way," however, it never yielded a second major hit single. *Tougher Than Leather*, the film vehicle which the group partially financed themselves—and which was scheduled to finish shooting on December 9, 1986—still doesn't have a distributor. Run now projects that it will come out in June, about a year later than originally planned. In the interim, a song the group recorded with Michael Jackson for his *Bad* album never came out.

Nor did the sequel to *Raising Hell*. Last July, Run-DMC.'s management company, Rush Artist Management, sued the group's record company, Profile, and its publishing company, Protoons, for \$6.8 million, for non-payment of royalties and publishing incomes. One month later, Profile countersued for \$2 million because Run-DMC. failed to deliver an album. When the parties finally settled their claim in February, 1988, Run-DMC. agreed to pay Profile's six-figure legal costs, and to stay with the label for ten more albums, under new, lucrative terms.

These have also been the years of giving prodigiously, at times, perhaps, even indiscriminately.

Took a little break, for goodness sake. Gotta chill, get ill, cold fishing by the lake. Listen, reminiscin', cold keep your pulse racin', Darryl (left) and Joe (right), and the deejay's Jason (center).

Since performing at Live Aid, Run-D.M.C. have become an international public interest organization, lending their support to nearly every good cause on the circuit: anti-drugs, anti-violence, money for the homeless, money for education, Reading Is Fundamental. They've set up their own scholarship fund, a \$100 savings bond awarded to the graduating senior in every high school in Queens who has the best attendance record. When they go on the road again, they'll have NAACP voter registration booths at all concerts. And they performed at a rally in support of Joe Clark, the Paterson, New Jersey, high school principal who has drawn support for patrolling the hallways with a bullhorn and baseball bat, and flak for chaining closed his school's fire exits and expelling a good part of the student body. In the wake of the backlash against violence at some of their shows, Run-D.M.C. became so exemplary that Russell Simmons, Run's older brother and the group's manager, publicly worried they were getting too soft. He told a *Rolling Stone* reporter, "I look at them and say, 'Stop being a pussy.' Let's hope a year from now people don't think they're suckers."

Now the wait is at last over, and any speculation about the crew's image retains only its recreational value. *Tougher Than Leather*, the album, is finished and set for May release, with the movie to follow in June or July. We may never see an album with a better chance to repeat the success of Michael Jackson's *Thriller*.

The Rush Artist Management offices are storming with activity on a Tuesday afternoon—people yelling across the room or into telephones, some stray b-boys drinking beer

and answering criticisms that they're too fat—as Run and D.M.C. (Darryl McDaniels) calmly retreat into a back office. It's two months before *Tougher Than Leather* is due out, and Run tries to keep D.M.C.'s attention on a stack of typewritten lyrics. "D," he says, "you paying attention to this shit? There's a lot of mistakes here." He begins to rap out the lyrics with all the intensity of a live performance. "I feel sorry for all those other emcees," he says. D.M.C. takes a bite out of his fish sandwich and says, apropos of nothing, "I gotta get some wrestling magazines after this."

"Saw you on the Grammys chilling with Michael J.," shouts a Rush employee, bursting into the room. He slaps hands with Run and D.M.C., and he's out again. Run goes back to the lyrics.

"You know," he says, "I had that line [on 'King of Rock'], 'There's three of us but we're not the Beatles.' I thought there were three Beatles. Didn't you, D?"

D.M.C. shrugs. "Naw."

"You knew I was fucking up?"

"Yeah."

"I can't believe you didn't say anything if there was four."

D.M.C. smiles. "Well, one of them died."

They both crack up. Today, Run is feeling loose.

RUN: I'm ready for the highest heights of my life, and I know I can handle it. But you know, I'm a "no pain, no gain" type of guy, and this system is a motherfucker, boy, 'cause I been painin' hard, real hard pain. More pain than anybody could ever understand. I just be fucking dusted. I just cry out of nowhere. I'm the town fucking cryer.

I'm telling you man, I been through some shit this

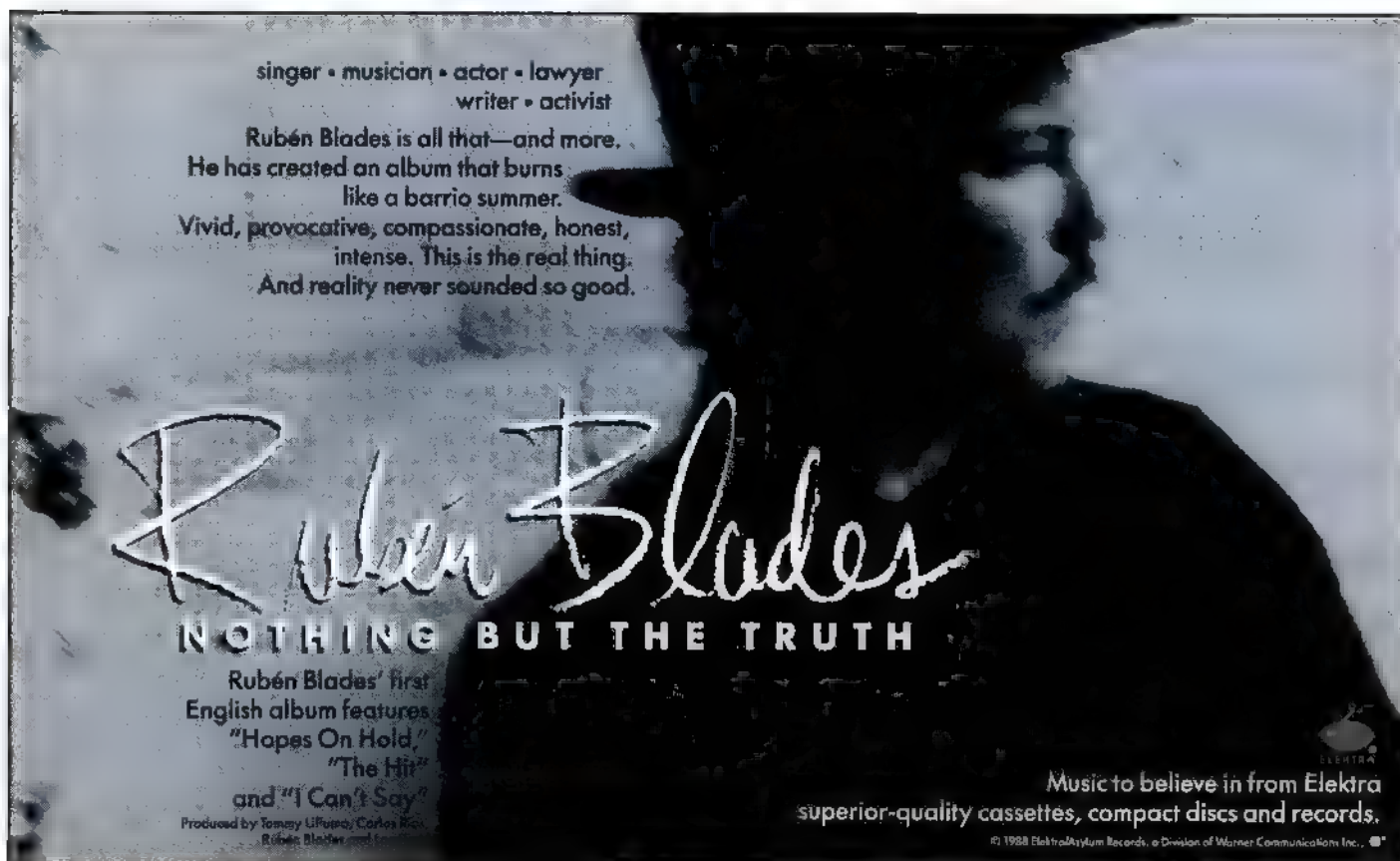
year. At one time during this year, I wasn't really sad and I was making my records, and I was coming up with the deffest shit. This is what nobody understands, why I'm always sad now. Then I was telling 'em that I was sorry for all the other emcees, the way my records was coming out, the way everything was happening. Then all the sudden I just dusted. My brain just clicked. My brain has been clicked for a while now. Ain't nothing been going through my mind but bullshit thoughts of "Fuck! Man, when my shit coming out?" And this and that, and just dusted, mean, fuck it, man. Like a real crazed maniac lately.

■ disillusion me about life. I got to ask everybody, "What the fuck is life all about?" You know? And I'm supposed to really know. Kids look at me like, "What the fuck is this guy talking about?" I'm looking at a kid, wondering why's everybody smiling and shit. Ain't nothing funny.

SPIN: What's been the best part of the last two years?

RUN: I could tell you the happiest day of my life. I got off the [Madison Square] Garden stage [July 19, 1986], and we had just ragged the motherfucker. I mean ragged it. I came out and said, "I beg your pardon, this is my motherfucking Garden." The crowd went out of their mind.

I got off the stage, and Angelo Anastasio [National Director of Entertainment Promotions for Adidas U.S.A.] was standing there, and he told me that no matter what, he'd put his life on it, I'ma have my own line of sneakers, Run-D.M.C. Adidas. And I got in the limo, all the way home there was this feeling of, "Oh shit, I don't believe this year. I'ma have my own line of Adidas. Michael Jackson wants to make records with me." I gave the fucking



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limo driver a \$100 tip. That had to be the highlight of my life.

SPIN: How about you, D?

D.M.C.: I had a lot of best days. My recent best day was when I bought my \$7,000 [stereo] system for my Chevy four-by-four.

RUN: Were you that happy, D?

D.M.C.: I'm happy to this day because of that. I can't wait to get in there and turn the music up so loud, people look.

RUN: That's your happiest day recently?

D.M.C.: Very, very happy. I don't go home at night-time, just drop all my friends off and drive around — take the long way home.

RUN: That is incredible. I could cry. That you take the long way home by yourself and just listen to your shit real loud? In your car? That is incredible. 'Cause all the pain I'm going through lately, I just can't understand anybody being happy.

SPIN: Did you ever imagine when you were starting out that you could get this far?

RUN: Yeah, in my visions. Me and D.M.C. was always visioning things like this to happen and they just happened years later. I notice Spike Lee's talking the same thing almost every day, about his visions.

It's just something you get into when maybe you're out in the street and all of a sudden you break into a cold sweat, you say, "You're the fucking king, D. You don't understand. You're the king of this whole shit." Just all the sudden, something



takes to your brain, something takes ■ the atmosphere, and this shit comes true, exactly what the fuck you was telling D.

I told him them glasses was the number one shit in the world. He wouldn't put the motherfuckers on. But when I get motivated vision it's all over, because I told D, "You're the fucking king of the whole shit. D.M.C. will go to the front of the stage and say, 'I'm D.M.C. of the party.' Whomp. Everybody gonna go crazy." A lot of the visions just seem to be coming true. He was like a little kid, didn't want to wear his glasses. I said, "Those glasses are the biggest shit, put 'em on. Your glasses, your hat." We were just little kids, 16, 17, walking down the block. It wasn't even dreaming. This was the serious shit I was telling D.

SPIN: Are you under a lot of pressure to keep topping yourself?

RUN: I don't know. We always outdo ourselves the next time. I respect all the artists that come out, but I always expect to come out and kick faces in, because I think people are sitting around every year,



waiting for me to get soft. Never happens. It's just disgusting, shit like this, year after year. I don't know when I'm gonna give up the crown. I don't think it's gonna be any time soon.

SPIN: Two years ago, Russell said he was worried that your image was getting too soft, with all the benefit shows.

RUN: I don't remember that.

D.M.C.: That's a manager's worry. That's not any of our worry.

RUN: We love doing stuff like that. That's the real shit, when you can give something. That's better than making money, you know, when I see somebody else happy. If I come home with something for my daughter tonight, it's just going to make me happier than if I came home with something for myself. We just came from doing a show for orphans out in L.A., just hopped on a plane, spent our own money, brought our whole crew, just to see these kids happy.

SPIN: You mentioned your daughter. You have two girls now, right?

RUN: That's right.

D.M.C.: Two beautiful daughters.

RUN: Angela and Vanessa. I just be chilling in the crib taking care of my business.

D.M.C.: And Jay has a son, Jason.

SPIN: Do you ever get a chance to relax, go on vacation?

RUN: I don't enjoy myself too much. I only enjoy myself when . . . let's see, when do I enjoy myself? I'm happy when I'm asleep.

SPIN: You look like you've lost some weight.

RUN: Yeah, both of us have lost weight. I lost all my weight in two weeks, just by I stopped eating. I actually dusted out a couple times. I was in L.A. for two weeks, Mike Tyson punched me in the stomach and told me I was out of shape, so I just lost all the weight in two weeks. But I found myself in the middle of the night, on the middle of the floor, trying to get food. I didn't tell you this, D. I'm over by the peanuts and shit. ■ was just like crazy. I was on a serious mission, man. I went into the sauna and just sat there till my face got skinny. You wouldn't see Joe, this whole two weeks. The next time you see me I'm just getting all deteriorated, started looking real good.

SPIN: How about you, D?

D.M.C.: I eat my dinner and that's just about it. I don't eat in McDonalds no more.

SPIN: Joe, I understand you like to go to the track.

RUN: I don't go to the track no more. I used to bet

horses. I was a hard bettor and a eater, and I bet on all the horses. I used to bet so much horses, it was the most incredible shit in my life. Crazy winner, man. I used to know how to beat them down. I was big time on horses. I used to bet probably ■ hundred ■ race, maybe sixty. I had a triple twice, three times. I had a science with this shit.

SPIN: Tell me about the movie.

RUN: Kinda ill.

D.M.C.: It's ill.

RUN: It's like a movie from back in the days. It's

"I'm surprised I'm still here. You get suicidal for the longest time. I'm still on that tip a little bit. I ain't shaved today."

like *The Mack* or something. Bug you out.

D.M.C.: Like the old black exploitation flicks.

RUN: I just wish it would come out.

SPIN: Are you your hardest critic?

RUN: Yeah, I'm pretty hard on my music, all day long. Because I need it so bad. I need to fucking take over the whole shit, pop and everything, by a large margin.

But I'm pretty happy when my record hits the radio. I like to be steaming hot at all times, so lately I've been kind of down in the dumps, just waiting and waiting and wondering, "Well, what's next to do?" Call the office. "What's up?" Be wanting to know what are the next developments. It fucks me up. Busts my head open.

What I would really like to do, to tell the whole truth—fuck the whole business. I think that I should just be able to drop records when I want, and when I got these hits, or these notions come. But man, shit is hectic in this business. We got to put out our album a certain time of year, and this type of money. I wish I could just sell the motherfucking records from my door, and put the money in the safe, and give D and Jay their cut. I made "Mary, Mary" [based on the Monkees' song] so long ago, this jam would have bust their face. A record called "Dedicated" [to Runny Ray], when I





first made it—could have dropped that. I'd have been busting everybody's ass so bad by now. But "Mary, Mary" got to sit and wait. Fucking headaches.

I'm surprised I'm still here—didn't pull a garage job: car in the garage, radio on, going to sleep. You get suicidal for the longest time. Dusted out my mind. Because I can't take it when I'm not fucking doing what I know I'm supposed to be doing. But sometimes shit goes that way. I guess it is kind of ready now. I'm still on that tip a little bit. I ain't shaved today.

Maybe after my album drops and I'm back on the road and doing what I'm supposed to do in this world, I'll be happy. But I think this interview was good for me. Maybe it will break some of my depression, just talking about this whole year, reflecting on great things.

BILL ADLER (Rush publicist): You should be looking to the future.

RUN: I'm looking for the future, Bill.



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TROUBLE MAN

He's been on drugs and on fire. He's the greatest comic of his time. Richard Pryor talks with his fourth ex-wife.

Interview by
Jennifer Lee

When I first met Richard, through a friend who was dating him at the time, all of Hollywood was pissed off at him. He had just insulted an entire audience of show-biz human rights activists at the Hollywood Bowl, which is to say that a lot of movers and shakers were present when Richard asked them, "Where were you all when Watts was burning?" He wore controversy well. Controversy and heartbreak.

It was my birthday, in August, 1978, in the Valley, and we sat on an oversized brass bed in Richard's house. There with the friend who was dating him and he was blue—heartsick over a woman who was "running game" on him. He was putting a major dent in a big bottle of vodka. You could feel the tears and smell the gardenias, even with hip, white-walled nasal passages. Richard picked up a gut-string guitar. He sat on the floor and leaned against the wall, closed his eyes and began to play. He played and sang about this woman and how she made him feel, all stream of consciousness. He moaned like an animal skinned alive. Tears rolled down his cheeks as the long brown fingers played this un-fucking-believable guitar. His hands moved like Django Reinhardt up and down the neck, and it sounded like Django too. He barred chords all over the place, and picked strings as if he'd been doing it all his life. The voice was from Heaven—if Billie Holiday had had a brother who sang, it would be Richard—but the words were from Hell. The demons and angels were out together that night. I remembered *Lady Sings the Blues*. It made a lot of sense that he was so good as Piano Man.

The first time I saw Richard on stage, I fell in love with him all over again. This time, though, it was with his courage and genius. He climbed onto the stage and began talking about the first thing he saw: candle wax on the floor. This is how he began to put an act together. Real guts. He was nervous, but he said he had to get in front of people again. A month earlier, he had shot his green Mercedes full of bullet-holes, with wife number three and two friends inside—trying to make a getaway. The scandal, court dates, and divorce had shaken him.

Candle wax took a left, and he was an angel spinning a silk web out of thin air. His moves were sensual and controlled. His swagger made him wise and savvy as he crossed the stage, and all the time, he was saying it with a subdued "Fuck you!" And suddenly he was taller. The hands that held the mike looked like a painter's: confident, sensitive, elegant. It seemed as if he lived onstage, telling people the truth. He said it like it was and Richard knew how bad things could get.

Richard Franklin Lenox Thomas Pryor had an uncle for every middle name—a euphemism for every pimp he had been named after. But his mother and father, Gertrude and Buck, adhered to tradition and the first name on the birth certificate went to Buck's brother, Richard, Uncle Dicky. So Richard sort of belonged to everyone. That's what it's like growing up in a whorehouse; you become a

collective teddy-bear-child. Played with, squeezed, hugged, and loved like a toy. They needed to love something. Violence, police raids, con-games, and hustling. Pimps, whores, and johns, and family somewhere in all this mix-up. You got to learn to laugh to survive. Laugh and fight. The screams in the middle of the night would wake Richard up. Were his mother and father fighting again? Or was it one of his many "aunts" and another strange man? He would lie there waiting for his grandmother, Madam Marie, King and Queen rolled into one, to make the screams stop. Marie was tough. So tough that when the judge put Richard in the witness chair and asked him who he wanted to live with, his mother or his grandmother, Richard was too afraid not to say his grandmother. But he would never forget the look on his mother's face. From this childhood, a harlequin was born.

The pain and rage went into the work. Like a vertical shower of razor blades, the memories cut deep, and only the blueprint fades. He tried to get out of his own head in all kinds of ways and the drugs seemed to work well, easier than the slow healing arms of love.

I moved out when the pipe moved in. We still saw each other but freebase had become Richard's woman. On June 9, 1981, I went to talk to Richard about going into a hospital and he told me it wasn't necessary because he had made up his mind how to fix it and that I had better leave or I might get hurt also. Then he poured a bottle of Bacardi's rum all over himself and lit himself on fire with a Bic lighter.

We were married a year later in Maui. Richard went back on drugs and the marriage shipwrecked on a boat in the Caribbean.

It is hot and the crazy-making Santa Annas are blowing as I travel toward Richard's home in a blue and white cab. It is the kind of heat that makes one think of making love or committing murder. I am delivered to the top of the red brick driveway and I see my old black Mercedes shining in the sun, looking like a woman anybody would want to fuck. Sonya, the housekeeper, greets me, "Mr. Pryor is waiting for you." As I stand in the entranceway, I look through the big blond doors at the other side of the room and see Richard sitting by the pool. He is wearing jeans, a white T-shirt and white Reeboks. As I walk through the living room towards him, loud disco music is playing on the stereo. I see another maid out of the corner of my eye. The house feels like an echo chamber. It is a studied ambience, but then I am in the land of perfection and well arranged 'atmo.' I kiss him hello. The energy seems good as I sit in a rattan chair next to him. There is no dirt on his white Reeboks. There are birds singing and off in the distance a Mexican gardener can be heard tending to his sprinklers. Sonya brings us Diet Cokes on a silver tray. I am overwhelmed by this isolated splendor. Richard is in the middle of another divorce and I can feel the pain beneath the surface.

Richard always thought his demons were his angels; he was afraid that to live without them meant to die as an artist. . . well, the demons almost killed him. I only hope they don't kill his art . . . completely.

I sense a profound need for contact. "Are you ready, Richard?" "Ready as I'll ever be." I feel sweat pass between my breasts as I press Record.

LEE: You just said that that you think I'm going to bury you in this interview. Why?

PRYOR: 'Cause I know you.

LEE: Well, I'm not going to bury you.

PRYOR: That's nice.

LEE: There was an interesting interview that Sam Shepard did with Bob Dylan in *Esquire*. I think I told you about it.

PRYOR: Yeah, you did.

LEE: Did you read it?

PRYOR: No. But I read the interview in *Playboy* that Dylan did and I got high.

LEE: Did you?

PRYOR: Yeah. I was on a plane and I started reading this interview and got high. He was saying things I've thought for a long time, and finally I was hearing them. It was real. I'm telling you, it got me high. He chose life.

LEE: What do mean, "chose life"?

PRYOR: He was lonely, got married, had kids, and then got divorced. He became a regular person. He succumbed.

LEE: Is that what you tried to do, succumb? If so, you haven't succeeded.

PRYOR: Right.

LEE: It's interesting that you aspire to mediocrity.

PRYOR: All my life, I've heard about the "other side." It was supposed to be the end-all. You understand. Perfect. *Perfucktimo*. I have strived for that but I can't get to it. But I have tried. Here I come, ready or not. Even after I ask myself, "Richard, what have you done?"

LEE: When you speak of the "other side," you mean "normal," right?

PRYOR: Yeah. And I hear myself say, "Richard, where have you taken me? What have you done?"

LEE: And then you get the fuck out real quick, right?

PRYOR: Yeah, that's what happened to us. Our romance was the best to me of anything romance-wise, and we fucked it up—both of us—with trying to be normal. With marriage. "I'm taking you away from all of this!" [laughs] I mean, you fixed my house. My balls were in the sand.

LEE: In the sand? And then I put them in a vice?

PRYOR: No, but you fucked with me a little. You were smart.

LEE: I was a bit nervous about seeing you on a professional basis. Are you nervous?

PRYOR: Yeah, a little. We had a great passion, that's for sure. You taught me stuff; maybe it bored you.

LEE: Well, you taught me, too. You made me tell the truth. And I know we both had to work through the color issue.

PRYOR: I'll never forget one thing you said to me: "You're a bad actor." No one ever said that to me. I always think of it, when I'd pretend how I was *really* feeling. God, I can be so stubborn. You would bust me, stop me cold.

LEE: You would get stuck in your roles, some weird, dishonest macho role.

PRYOR: You'd bust me. I loved it.

LEE: Remember when you called me a white, honky bitch?

PRYOR: I never called you that.

LEE: You didn't? Richard! On stage, once.

PRYOR: Yeah, that was the only time. You had said that some people thought your name was white, honky bitch, so I put it in my act.

LEE: But I could never call you a n—

PRYOR: Be careful!

LEE: And I'm not going to right now.

PRYOR: You did spit on me once, remember?

LEE: Yeah. And you almost shot me. But that word. I remember that time in Hawaii when we were high and I actually called you the dreaded N-word. You took me outside and pointed to the stars and asked me to show you which star was called a n-i-g-g-e-r. It was the sweetest thing because you didn't punch me in the head. As you did later... [laughter]

PRYOR: I remember you went, "He's going to kill me." You were talking as if there was somebody



David Alexander/Comma-Litton

else in the car, but there was just us. You kept saying, "He's going to kill me. He's going to kill me."

LEE: But all you did was make love to me in the pasture with the cows watching.

PRYOR: You were scary.

LEE: I was?

PRYOR: Just the fact that you could stand there. "Alright, I'll catch your best shot!" I would think,

"This bitch is crazy!"

LEE: Yeah, like you'd have to kill me. Remember the time you took that gun?

PRYOR: Yep. That time, I thought *for sure* I would have to kill you. You were ready to play it out. I thought, "This bitch is as bad as you, Richard."

LEE: Yeah, I knew you were happy that I walked out of the house. You had that gun cocked and I counted the bullets. You blew off three and there were two left. So when you cocked the trigger that last time, I was through counting. And when I came back in twenty minutes, you said, "Thank God I didn't have to kill you!" [laughter] And they call us crazy.

PRYOR: Jenny, I'm glad I didn't kill you. I should have fucked your brains out, though.

The marriage thing, I don't know why it was so important.

LEE: Apparently it means something to you—

you've done it five times.

PRYOR: I always thought it would make everything all right. But the minute after I did it, I would wake up in bed the morning after and wonder, "What am I doing here with this person?"

LEE: I think you married sometimes to end relationships, not to continue them. [laughter] You still have your wedding ring on.

PRYOR: And I'm not going to take it off.

LEE: Why? As a reminder? Sort of like a hair shirt?

PRYOR: That's what people say to me. I say, fuck 'em.

LEE: So, Richard, what the hell was that Barbara Walters interview you did last year all about? Did you do it because of the rumor about you having AIDS?

PRYOR: Yeah.

LEE: You wanted to show the world you were normal?

PRYOR: Yeah, that's why I was doing it. It was sickening.

LEE: Not sickening, just transparent. So you are healthy, just thin. [pause] Why are you so fucking thin, Richard?

PRYOR: I love it. I put on a swim suit and think, "Not bad. I'm going to die, but I got a 22-year-old body!"

LEE: Does the word anorexia mean anything to you?

PRYOR: I eat! I had a good breakfast today—steak, eggs, potatoes...

LEE: No more drugs?

PRYOR: No drugs, Jen. That's tired. Not for almost five years. I can hardly believe it myself.

LEE: What do you think of dope now?

PRYOR: Dope used to be hip, now it's for squares. Used to be another thing before the masses took it into their loving arms. Just for squares now.

LEE: As negative as getting high is, do you think there was anything beneficial about it?

PRYOR: At one time there was. Once it could free me up, but then if it made me feel good once, why not all the time, you know? And that's the rub. I was doomed. Nobody's fault. I'm sure somewhere back in my family there's another one just like me.

LEE: What about the rage, the demons?

PRYOR: They don't rage much anymore.

LEE: Like a tired old monster?

PRYOR: Very tired. He hath consumed me.

LEE: Has this lack of rage quieted your need to do standup?

PRYOR: Something has. I'm glad it happened after I made money. These days, it's no big deal; it's just not kicking my ass anymore.

The other night, I went to the Comedy Store and stood up—let some leftover rage out.

LEE: How was it?

PRYOR: Good. I don't know what it was all about, but the other comics seemed to like it.

LEE: I bet they were happy to see you.

PRYOR: Yeah. A couple of 'em came back to the house afterwards. I gave them some soda, it was nice. They were nervous.

LEE: Well, you're their idol, no?

PRYOR: Then they left.

LEE: Who's funny these days? You like Bob Goldthwait, don't you?

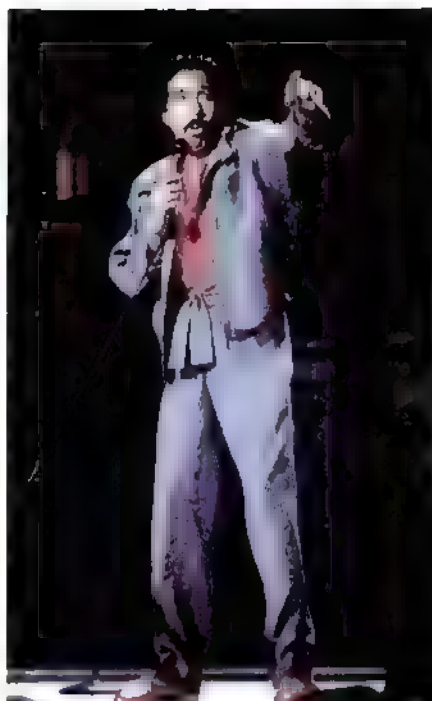
PRYOR: Yeah, he's funnier than his screaming thing, you know. I saw him on HBO the other night. Smart, angry, political.

LEE: How about black comedians? Redd Foxx takes credit for paving the way for them. Do you agree?

PRYOR: It was Dick Gregory.

LEE: But he was political.

PRYOR: He became that. But before that, he was real funny. I'd never seen anything like him. Then



he got really involved in the whole civil rights movement. But he was a funny motherfucker.

LEE: Remember when he came to the house and chewed the cashews without swallowing them?

PRYOR: He was on a fast. You can eat anything, just don't swallow and you won't gain weight.

LEE: What about Bill Cosby?

PRYOR: Bill is definitely the funniest comedian around. I remember the first time I saw him. I loved him. I wanted to be him.

LEE: You used to imitate him at times.

PRYOR: When I would get nervous.

LEE: Eddie Murphy.

PRYOR: I am so fucking happy for him. I wish something like that would happen to me.

LEE: You do?

PRYOR: Yeah. He is fucking kicking ass. How can you not be happy for him and not want it at the same time? For real. I mean, his first movie really pissed me off.

LEE: Why?

PRYOR: When I went to see it, people would turn around to look at me to see if they should laugh. He was real funny, but so were the people who were checking me out.

LEE: What do you think of Whoopi?

PRYOR: She's a stupendous actress. If she can get lucky enough to keep getting parts like in *The Color Purple*, she can go really high.

LEE: Let's switch gears for a moment. I did an article about how I thought you weren't truthful in your autobiographical movie, *Jo Jo Dancer*. How do you feel about that film today?

PRYOR: I feel I did the best I could. I redirect it every night. And now I know stuff I didn't know then. Looking at it in hindsight, it could have been much better.

LEE: More truthful. In the movie, when you catch your wife in bed with another man and woman, you hit the wall—not your wife. I guess I'm putting you on the spot, but I thought, "Wait a minute, Richard, you would have hit her. I know." Why not tell the truth if that's what you set out to do?

PRYOR: Well, I let you read the script. You told me it was good.

LEE: That's true.

PRYOR: I hate you for that. You said that, then you put it in that article in *People*. You should have told me before I shot it. Somebody should have.

You know, *Jo Jo* broke even—didn't lose money. Maybe soon it will be in the black. I hope so.

LEE: So at least it was a good work experience.

PRYOR: The best. I loved the actors, the entire crew, the set designer, the cinematographer. They gave so much of themselves to the project. They took a chance with me; they discarded the rules and put their trust and faith in me. I love them for that. No reservations, no questions asked. True blue dedication.

LEE: Do you want to direct again?

PRYOR: Yes. I would love to.

LEE: Any projects you want to do?

PRYOR: There is a good script on Charlie Parker, but reading it tells me the work in it might be too much.

LEE: You mean, pull you on the dark side again?

PRYOR: Exactly. If Scorsese did it, though, or someone like him.

LEE: You need to feel safe when you do something like that?

PRYOR: Yeah. Or something with John Cleese—a small part but a good part.

LEE: In other words, you'd like to do good work.

PRYOR: Yes. I would like to be a human being instead of a caricature. Like Harrison Ford: He gets to be a person, a regular man. I would like that. To be able to play a regular person.

I would like to do two more films for money—interspersed with good work.

LEE: Does one exclude the other?

PRYOR: Seems so. More than not.

LEE: Have you thought of going to Europe for a while? Finding artists like Bertolucci?

PRYOR: I can go to Watts for that.

LEE: There are Bertoluccis in Watts?

PRYOR: There is *life* in Watts.

LEE: Apropos to *Jo Jo*, what do you think of black exploitation films in general?

PRYOR: It's a different medium, film. Music you can play on horn, piano—but film is difficult. The gates opened up and too many came rushing in. But they *did* try, and the statement they were trying to make was valid. I think the ones that are coming are going to be a bitch, though.

Black souls and minds are universal in spirit—they surpass the bullshit and do major work. But at the end of the day, it's just a movie.

LEE: Still, your movies have kept you going right on to success, and people wonder if that success has had an effect on you. Here you are, sequestered in this gorgeous home, with your fame, your money. Does it inhibit your creativity?

PRYOR: Fear does that.

LEE: Despite the fame and money, do you feel isolated, cut off?

PRYOR: Sometimes. It's a funny thing: It doesn't make you a better person, it only makes you acutely aware of your shortcomings. The adulation—people think you know something and you become aware that you don't know it. It's frightening. So you pretend you *do* know something, so they won't take back the adulation, the love. You walk around with this gigantic secret.

LEE: I wish I had a baby with you, sometimes.

PRYOR: Do you?

LEE: Yeah.

PRYOR: He'd be six now.

LEE: Yeah.

PRYOR: He'd be running around with his friends, falling in the rocks. "Get out of those rocks!"

LEE: There was that memory of your father...

PRYOR: Yeah, at the funeral. He was lying in the casket. I put a rose in his lapel and a hundred dollar bill in his pocket.

LEE: Just in case he needed it?

PRYOR: Yeah. They probably took it out before they closed the casket.

LEE: Your family is very heavy.

PRYOR: Well, they are gone and I'm alone.

Uncle Dickie is left, though.

LEE: Where is he?

PRYOR: In Peoria. He's got wisdom. I'm glad they're not here, though, as much as I love 'em.

LEE: Are you?

PRYOR: Yeah. I mean, can you imagine being with your parents all the time?

LEE: Your grandmother and I locked horns more than once. She was a piece of work.

PRYOR: It was peripheral. It wasn't dead on.

LEE: I don't think she wanted to let go of you, Richard.

PRYOR: Never.

LEE: Tell me about Gertrude, your mother.

PRYOR: I'm sorry you never met her.

LEE: I remember the story about you taking her shopping to buy a pocketbook—Bonwit Teller, Saks—so she would look nice when she came to see you on the show. Ed Sullivan, right?

PRYOR: Merv Griffin. They put the camera on her for too long.

LEE: Did she freak?

PRYOR: No. I told them, "You've got it on her too long. Turn it off."

LEE: Why? Was it making her nervous?

PRYOR: It was making me nervous.

LEE: Why?

PRYOR: I don't know.

LEE: From everything I know about her, she sounded very special. Going up against that heavy-duty family of yours must have been hard for her.

PRYOR: [My father] Buck and Gertrude were like me and [my ex-wife] Flynn. Flynn had that spark. At times, I know how Buck must have felt. Flynn? I would tell her not to do something, and she would do it.

LEE: Like what kinds of things?

PRYOR: Simple things.

LEE: You couldn't control Deborah either.

PRYOR: I suppose I shouldn't have married you all.

LEE: It seems so. But, ah, what sweet misery.

PRYOR: Marriage *does* seem to fuck it all up. I want to see Deborah.

LEE: Where is she?

PRYOR: She's not talking to me.

LEE: Is she the love of your life? In fact, who is the love of your life?

PRYOR: I guess if I combined all my wives, you each had something special the other didn't have.

LEE: That's interesting, Richard, and fuck you.

PRYOR: It's nice to have a purpose at Christmas. To be with someone you like. My wife didn't celebrate Christmas.

LEE: Because she was a Jehovah's Witness?

PRYOR: Yeah. I lit up every fucking tree on the block, anyway. Anybody who didn't have a tree, I bought 'em one.

LEE: There have been stories in which she said you beat your son. I know you have hit women, but never children or animals. This is true, isn't it?

PRYOR: Yeah, I've hit women. I spanked my son, but I didn't beat him. And I never hit her. Since you, I haven't hit anyone else—man, woman, or child. I have been able to control that part of me.

LEE: Well, I'm glad to hear you didn't beat him.

PRYOR: Well, I kicked him in the mouth and knocked out a few teeth, but...

LEE: [laughs] Okay, well that's allowed.

Pryor: "You did spit on me once, remember?"

Lee: "Yeah, and you almost shot me."

PRYOR: I wish you could see him. You would look at his face and die. He's a heartbreaker.

LEE: Totally lovable?

PRYOR: He takes you to the stars, to heaven.

LEE: How about the other children? Rain and Elizabeth? Richard, Jr.?

PRYOR: They're strong. They are working it out. Trying to make it work for them. They are also nice people. Elizabeth really surprised me. She's not just smart—she's particular and special. She calls me up to talk about her school, college. She's all excited about it. She's beginning to see what her life will be. It makes me cry.

I talked to Richard, Jr. the other day.

LEE: It can't be easy being your son, being Richard Pryor, Jr. It's heavy.

PRYOR: It's already heavy.

LEE: How old is he now?

PRYOR: He's 26. He's not living here.

You know, sometimes my life feels like 2001. Remember when the guy looks back over his life, the different stages?

LEE: Do you feel you're at the beginning again?

PRYOR: I guess. I survived, didn't I?

LEE: Yes, and you beat the odds.

PRYOR: I have to remember to forget that, sometimes. There are days when I feel my generator is turned off, or the machine is just broken down.

LEE: Another movie you identify with was *Manhunter*. You said you watched it 16 times. In the film, there was a scene where the killer and a blind woman make love. Afterwards, he takes the woman's hand, puts it over his mouth and weeps. You identified with that, didn't you?

PRYOR: Yeah, I did. I felt his pain. I felt sorry for the son-of-a-bitch. They had to kill him, he was so sick.

LEE: Richard, what's the best sexual encounter you've ever had?

PRYOR: When I was nine, there was a lady I used to do errands for. She was 27.

LEE: You mean you fucked someone when you were nine? Are you serious?

PRYOR: She showed me stuff. She helped me.

LEE: Did you have an orgasm?

PRYOR: I had a funny feeling. But she came. Then she sent me away. I think my grandmother got wind of it, 'cause she left town.

LEE: They ran her out?

PRYOR: Something happened.

LEE: So that was your first experience.

PRYOR: I always thought my father fixed it up for me—you know, an initiation. But now I don't think that anymore. Then there was Susan, in the garage. I was 14 or 15 and that was some serious fucking.

Continued on page 61

MUSIC FROM THE WILD WEST

LESLIE WEST • THEME



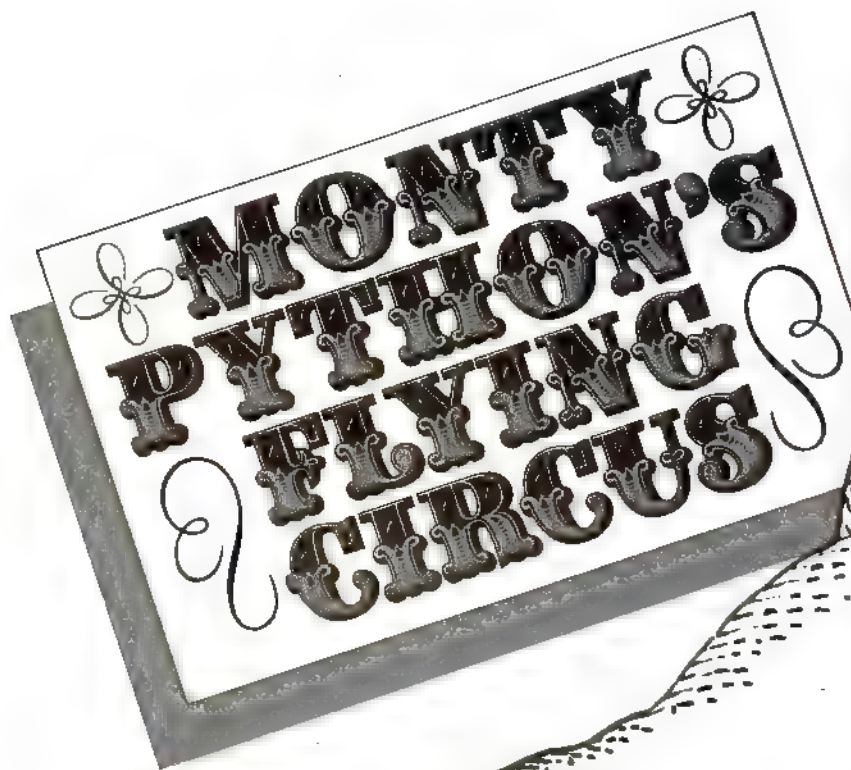
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ROCK 'n' ROBYN

A private man
owns up in public.

Robyn Hitchcock is learning: Hennessey is not a miracle cure for jet lag. And the packet of loose tobacco he's transported across the Atlantic now lies crumpled in his New York hotel room amidst apple cores and the schedule of tomorrow's publicity grind. He wants cigarettes. He needs sleep. But before all this, he must emphasize a fact about himself: To wit, "I'm not cast in the role of martyr. I'm more of an interpreter. I'm not here to be in isolation. That's the whole thing about art. Art is a very selfish thing, a very private thing. You basically want to shut everything off; at the same time, it's also for the benefit of everyone else. So it's a completely split set-up, and that's the way things operate."

He pauses for a long moment and stares out the window, across Central Park, to the stately Dakota on Manhattan's Upper West Side, the site of John Lennon's murder. Hitchcock sighs with resignation. "It doesn't matter," he observes. "It'll all be gone in fifteen seconds. It's very dull. There's no big manifesto. It's not like, 'Hey, man, let's turn into shrimps!' I know how people work. And they're a lot more bizarre than shrimps."

That's typical Robyn Hitchcock: an obsession with death in somber counterpoint to the Monty Python-like humor that ultimately dominates his work. In town to promote his first major label release, *Globe of Frogs* (A&M), Hitchcock proceeds to offer more (and, fortunately, generally sunnier) pronouncements on the state of the world, his art, you name it. One moment he ponders the careers of Herman's Hermits, the next he rewrites *Romeo and Juliet*. His little explosions of insight and dry wit have turned his live performances into a kind of English Lake Wobegon for smart rockers. If you had only one dinner party to go to in your life, he is the man you should sit next to. He has a broad range of interests, ping-ponging from Dylan and Lennon to the pigeons outside ("It's nothing to them to fly across Central Park. If one of us flew across Central Park, no one would believe it!"). Like his work, his conversation is incongruous, intelligent, and thoroughly entertaining. But for all his expansiveness, there's one topic he will not touch: himself.

Hitchcock, so precise in the language and im-



agery of his songs, is deliberately vague when it comes to the details of his own existence. Professionally, the man is cutting a high profile, having landed on A&M after founding seminal mid-Seventies psychedelicians the Soft Boys and releasing to an ever-growing cult seven solo albums on independent labels since 1984. And still he remains something of an enigma. Perhaps that's because, unlike the Lennons, Springsteens, Mellencamps, and most regulation rock stars, he's no working class hero—or more precisely, doesn't pretend to be one. This much he will allow: He is 35 years old, the product of a classic all-male boarding school and son of a sometime-painter and writer, from whom he apparently inherited a sense of the bizarre. He is also the father of two children, which

Article by
Deborah Frost

Photography
by Laura Levine

may account for his current preoccupation with his own mortality. Of his family life, he will say only that the "erasing factor" of it amazes him. "As your kids reach a certain age, you forget what it was like to be that age. So by the time they're twenty, I'll have forgotten what it was like to be twenty. Obviously after a while, you tend to sympathize with your parents, 'cause you realize what it was like.'"

His own father "writes a variety of things, mostly thrillers. But he hasn't really been pushed into the John Le Carré bracket. His best stuff is actually his ideas. He wrote an amazing thing about people with their sex organs in their armpits. In another one, people are living in an urban airport after the collapse of society. He's also incredibly funny. I don't know if he's got any musical ability. But I didn't have either. I just forced myself to have it. I'm not really a good singer. But most people aren't either. And I'm not a great player. But I know how to use it. I suppose I love music. He does—but in those days, there wasn't the opportunity to become a bandleader."

Mr. Hitchcock's son, however, grew up in the Sixties, when the era's promising paisley umbrella encouraged him to combine his interests in theater, poetry, and art. Otherwise, "I would have been a comedian or a painter, an academic. When I was a kid, the thing to be was a rock musician. Nowadays it's settled down into entertainment again. It's show business. It's Tin Pan Alley. In those days it was like prophets of a new consciousness. Dylan, Lennon, the Beatles; comparisons to *The Waste Land* and stuff."

As a teenage musician operating in this heightened atmosphere, Hitchcock flew on automatic pilot. "I had no idea how you made a song up. My earlier songs were really much more elaborate, because all I could see was being elaborate. Also, it was the day of the ten-minute concept. Things have gotten pared down now. But I've actually evolved an understanding about how melody works, and I know what effect I'll have if I change from major to minor, things like that. So I've evolved the craft, simply through time. I didn't have any gift for it."

With the Soft Boys, whose drummer, Morris Windsor, and bassist, Andy Metcalfe, have since rejoined Hitchcock as the Egyptians, Hitchcock attempted to fuse *Abbey Road* with Captain Beefheart's *Trout Mask Replica*. What's always distinguished Hitchcock's efforts, for that matter, from the Soft Boys on, is not only his massive debt to Beefheart, but ambitious lyrics that far exceed his limited musical technique. "The difference now is I'm just trying to write songs. I don't really even care what they sound like. Nor am I interested in perpetuating my own myth as to how I do what I do, to draw attention to Robyn Hitchcock, what is festering in his head or whatever. I don't think words matter; I don't think they matter a'tall. I don't think any of my songs is as nonsensical as awopbopalooopawopbambam or whatever it is, because basically you're just chanting something—'sleeping with your devil mask,' it doesn't matter. Too much. It's just to write, till I get a stroke or something, until I cease to exist. Sadly, I have so little time for it now."

The demands of impending stardom have forced him, "in true rock star fashion, mate," to write lyrics on airplanes. So he concentrates on turning negatives into positives. "Being in motion helps," he explains. "There are two ways of being in motion: One is to have a guitar and be singing. The other is to be doing something you don't like doing—unblocking the drain or shopping for the fifth time because you've forgotten the carrots. Then out it comes."

And out it goes. Hitchcock is a relentless and

ruthless editor. He estimates that the process of unblocking drains generates twenty or thirty new song ideas, of which fifteen or twenty get recorded, of which ten actually are released to the public. Then, "maybe two will turn out to be songs you will still play in five years time. And when you're dead and buried, if you're lucky, in the Oxford Book of Dodgy Rock Stars, three of all your songs will be remembered, y'know? But you're not really doing it to be remembered. It's just that each attempt is a fresh attempt at getting it right. Not even getting it right: Every time, the clock is set back to zero, and now's your chance to do it again. You might get there, but there's not much point in worrying about it."

For Hitchcock, the risk of creativity is the most essential and exhilarating part of the process. "You can't try to control things, humans can't. That's my

"People are a lot more bizarre than shrimps."

whole point, and it's nothing new. I would rather take the risk, be erratic half the time, fuck up, than never do anything a'tall. And it seems to me, people don't return half the record and say, 'I don't like this bit on this track, Hitchcock.' It's like the old British thing of being a good loser. Play a hard game and accept that if you lose, you've lost. But don't give up or you're through."

If that's not a prototypical blue-collar ethic, what is? And the man who only a few minutes ago disdained lyrics as "not important a'tall" now asserts that he "makes records to listen to, not to do anything else. They're meant to be there like a book. They're not to drive to or clean up to because it gets on your nerves. Most stuff you hear now isn't really exciting. It's designed to smooth away; it's like cocaine, it's designed to make you kind of numb and acceptant. A lot of money is spent on records that

people talk over, which seems to me to be a complete waste of time."

Right there, that slavish devotion to excellence, is the edge on Robyn Hitchcock's art that's given him the greater recognition he's not even sure he wants in the first place. The Hitchcock enigma is rooted in its duality: He could easily be part of the mainstream, but instead prefers to remain decidedly outside it, while gingerly testing the water each time out. "We aren't part of a movement," he cautions. "In England, when the Soft Boys got going, there were the punks and then there were the dismals and then there was the Two Tone squad and then there were the smoothies. It was literally like trying to get a car out of a junction onto the main road. Every time you want to come out, something else gets in the way. And there just wasn't an opening. It couldn't be done because there weren't three other bands that they could lump us with. And if you look at any of the other bands that worked, that got there, there were always three or four of them. Or, going back to the Sixties, there was the sort of cross-fertilization that took place between Dylan and the Beatles and the Byrds and the rest of it. I feel more like someone like Kate Bush who arrived at a completely inappropriate moment but managed to get along and just doesn't fit in with anything."

Nevertheless, *Globe of Frogs'* off-kilter groovy melodies ("Balloon Man," "Flesh Number One") and startling lines (such as, "One thing Shakespeare never said was you're kidding" from "Chinese Bones") are not only spontaneously exciting, but also represent Hitchcock's most skillful synthesis of literate pop and personal mania. And through a plume of smoke from a hand-rolled cigarette, the enigma admits, yes, he has a mission, and it's so elementary. "Sure, I'm in patterns," he allows. "There may come a point when something new enters my kind of vocabulary. But I don't claim to be working different themes. I've got enough to keep me going for life. My basic theme is 'why'? And they're all attempts not to actually answer why, but to frame it in such a way that eventually you will ask why."

"And when you find out," he concludes, laughing, "you can write me, care of A&M Records, and I can stop writing songs!"



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MOVING IMAGES



stores and funeral homes—the backroad underbelly of the American dream. And while his grainy images inspired generations of photographers, they were not what the masses wanted to see. “Even the Museum of Modern Art refused to carry it,” says the 63-year-old Frank. “They thought I was anti-American just because I criticized. But that’s part of liking a place.”

Though the mainstream rejected him, others saw his work as a visual equivalent to Jack Kerouac’s *On the Road*. A year later Frank made a film documentary on the Beats called *Pull My Daisy*, which Kerouac scripted and narrated. Kerouac’s philosophy of motion has not been lost on Frank. In New York City for a couple of days, he’s already itching to split. “Let’s get this over with,” he hisses to the publicist as we settle down in the former Bowery flophouse that he likes to call home.

By tomorrow morning Frank will be off to Birmingham, Alabama, to shoot a job for a newspaper down there, then it’s back to his country retreat in Nova Scotia. “I like being in between places,” says Frank, sitting in a ratty swivel chair and sipping coffee from a water glass. “It gives me more tension, more stress, and that seems to help my work.”

Candy Mountain is Frank’s biggest project to date, his first film slated for mass distribution. Still, no one will mistake it for a slick Hollywood effort. “It would have been impossible to do a real Hollywood production,” says Wurlitzer, who ended up codirecting the film. “Robert was barely able to deal with the organizational aspects as it was.” For his part, Frank describes the shooting schedule as “a strait jacket. I wish it had more spontaneity at the edges, but it just wasn’t possible. Everything had to be figured out beforehand and I found it very limiting. But on the other hand the picture is clean and neat. You have to weigh the two sides.”

Generating raw energy was not the only problem that Frank faced. Most of his cast lacked screen experience. “The musicians are harder to work with than actors,” Frank continues. “The actors are professionals. With musicians you have to make allowances. You can put a lot of them in front of a camera for two minutes, but ten minutes sometimes turns out to be too long.”

Wurlitzer, who brought in most of the musicians, looks at it in a more positive light. “It was fun to use those guys,” he says, “especially in a road film that has thirteen or fourteen episodes. The connection is almost

It was 1977, a few months after Keith Richards was arrested in Toronto for possession of heroin. Robert Frank was sitting around his home in nearby Nova Scotia when the sheriff arrived at his door with a lawyer representing the Rolling Stones. They presented Frank with a search warrant and asked to have a look inside.

While the filmmaker seethed, the sheriff and lawyer searched his home. They found a file of still photographs that Frank shot on tour with the Stones in 1972, but they didn’t find what they were looking for: Super-8 footage of Mick Jagger filming himself masturbating, of Richards shooting heroin, of a naked woman being lugged around the group’s private plane.

They’d come for Frank’s copy of *Cocksucker Blues*, his gritty, depressingly honest documentary of that same 1972 Stones tour, which he’d filmed at the band’s request. Though Richards had apparently loved the movie, Jagger saw the potential damage it could cause and had it quelled, limited to a few unadvertised showings a year, mostly in museums. Now with Richards’s

Robert Frank’s documentary on the Rolling Stones was so raw that even the band was offended. Now the ex-Beat is back with *Candy Mountain*, a gritty road movie.

trial upcoming, they wanted it buried completely. They didn’t get the film—it was in Frank’s New York City apartment—but they did leave him with a lasting impression. “They had a right to pull the movie,” he says now, “but I was pissed off at the way they did it. Their lawyers, their power... It would have been very easy for them to deal with me on a human level, but the Stones travel in a different atmosphere. And it’s an atmosphere I’m glad not to be in.”

Sixteen years after *Cocksucker Blues*, Frank is back with *Candy Mountain*, a semi-autobiographical film featuring dramatic performances by Tom Waits, Dr. John, Buster Poindexter, Joe Strummer, and Arto Lindsay. Written by Rudy Wurlitzer (*Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid*, *Two Lane Blacktop*, *Walker*), it’s a classic

road movie, the story of a down-and-out musician named Julius (Kevin O’Conner) who wanders through alien Canadian countryside in a desperate search for legendary guitar maker Elmore Silk (Harris Yulin). Ironically, the young musician does not track down the guitar maker out of respect for his craft, but because he’s desperate for any kind of break he can get from acquiring and selling Silk’s rare instruments. When he finally catches up with Elmore, Julius discovers that he’s even more desperate than he thought.

For Frank, the episodic road movie is a natural extension of his work. In 1959 the Swiss immigrant published a book of photographs called *The Americans*, which stared down the unwavering eye of the Eisenhower era, capturing Americans in roadhouses and bus stations, drug

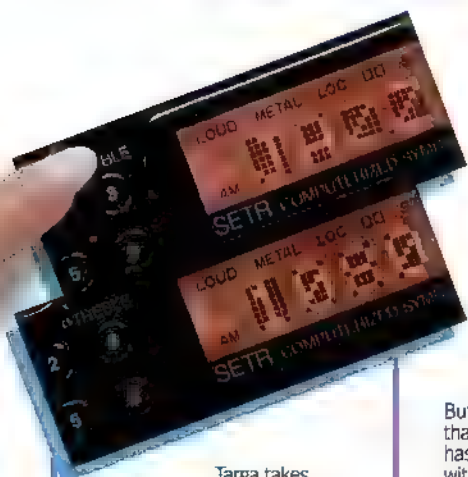
Joy Adams

Continued on page 61

Robert Frank on the set of *Candy Mountain*.

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Peter Schuster/SIPA

ANTIHERO

Arizona is where the Wild West came to rest,
where car dealers form posses to foil communist plots.
Arizona is where Ev Mecham, American,
has made his last stand.

"If you can't deal with Mecham, you just can't deal."

—Mecham Pontiac's slogan

Maybe first I ought to explain about Arizona. Arizona is—no, never mind, forget it. Can't be done. Not without letting Ev Mecham have the first whack at it, anyway. Because when it comes to divining the depths of the ill-defined, the Governor's credentials are unimpeachable. Ev says, "The image that I think we have is that Arizona is a place where people can speak their minds, and they have a governor who does that." And the great thing about Arizona, as evidenced by Ev Mecham himself, is that nobody ever insists that you have very much in the way of a mind before you commence to shooting your mouth off.

Arizona is where the Old West crawled off to die. Or if not actually to die, then at least to establish a cranky early retirement. Arizona is God's country, wide open spaces of desert so dry and hard and craggy that only the bravest, boldest, and most devotedly crooked of developers dares plant a For Sale sign. Arizona is a man's man's No Man's Land, where bikers gripe when they have to check their hogleg pistols before bellying up to the go-go bar to hoot at the tattooed topless cuties. Arizona is where the cactus meets the palm tree at poolside just the way God intended, where the Official State Tie is shaped like a noose, where the Mormons and the Mexicans and the Mercury dealers can all get together to agree on just exactly what kind of people we need less of around here.

Maybe you also need to know that some Mormons believe Arizona is part of the Promised Land of Deseret, the honeyed land the Lord intended to be ruled over by Latter-Day Saints. Persecuted and driven off into the desert for practicing the first all-American religion—"My policy is to get rich," said Brigham Young—the Mormons developed a siege mentality, an Us versus Them sensibility, a tendency to lump non-Mormons into the unredeemed category entitled "Gentiles." Back in the days of the wild frontier, the only folks who ever managed to put a serious scare into the Apaches were the Mormons, who were dead certain that the Indians were actually the Lamanites, one of the long-lost Twelve Tribes of Israel. The Mormons figured the Lamanites had wandered off to Arizona and were just waiting for Mormon missionaries to show up and fill them in on the true faith, to cut them in on the real deal. The more the Lamanites tried to ex-

plain otherwise, in their gentle Apache way, the more the Mormons got sore.

You definitely need to know that Ev Mecham is a Mormon. Last spring, when the blooms were on the cactus and the fur had only barely begun to fly, the Governor was the beneficiary of a fundraiser held at Mesa's Rockin' B Ranch. Mesa is the seat of Arizona's greatest concentration of Mormons, and the featured speaker was Brigham Young University's W. Cleon Skousen, Mecham's acknowledged political guide and mentor. Skousen declared Mecham "a modern-day Isaiah." He was entirely serious. "Isaiah was beaten, spit on, and persecuted as a prophet." God had told Evan Mecham he would be chosen as governor, Skousen said, and that he would help save America as well. To get the complete picture, you need to have seen Ev Mecham grin.

The details of how Evan Mecham succeeded in being elected governor on his fifth attempt are, divinely ordained or not, less than fascinating. His opponent in the Republican Party primary, campaigning against a notorious four-time loser, failed to take Mecham seriously and got whipped. Handled an almost inevitable victory, the Democrats got greedy and managed to split their vote between a party hack and a last-minute wildcat. God works in mysterious ways, and Ev Mecham firmly believes he's one of those ways. A political outsider all his life, raised in a religion of outsiders, he was in at last.

Born and raised in tiny Altamont, Utah, shot down in his P-51 Mustang over Nazi Germany, Evan Mecham's date with destiny took place in the small central Arizona copper mining town of Ajo, where he sold cars at the Pontiac agency. "A local joke was that the Pontiac was 'the Mexican Cadillac,'" he wrote later. "There was no slur intended, and nobody seemed to mind." By 1950, he had a Pontiac dealership of his own in Glendale, a sleepy town just outside Phoenix that came fully equipped with plenty of Mexican-Americans. He ran for U.S. Senator. He ran for governor. He was elected—once—to the state legislature. Disgruntled with the socialistic bent of the local arch-conservative newspapers, he started his own. *The Evening American* is perhaps best remembered for its pre-

Top: Evan Mecham at his impeachment hearings.
Left: Mecham supporters, convinced a good guy is getting railroaded.



Article by Bart Bull

Cognac and Passion

Alizé.
The beautiful blend
of natural
passion fruit juices
and fine cognac.
Imported from France.
So good on the rocks.
Very smooth.
Very mixable.
And very, very delicious.



Alizé



U.S.A. Today use of colorful American flags on the front page. Local legend has it that the established dailies owned the rights to all the syndicated comics available, and in Arizona, news will never take the place of the funny papers. Ev's *Evening American* folded quick.

Ev wasn't the first Arizona car dealer to run for governor. Lincoln-Mercury dealer Jack Ross, best known for spectacular TV commercials featuring his former starlet wife Acquafetta (of *Paula the Ape Woman* fame), had obtained the Democrats' nomination in the Seventies, losing narrowly. Arizona was fertile soil for car salesmen with the urge for celebrity, with cowboy-hatted Ford dealers riding *Burma Bulls*, with the *Loan Arranger* and his sidekick *Carlotta Sales*, with *Smilin' Ev Mecham* and his well-trained toupee.

It was two weeks into his term that the new Governor made the move that would set the tone of his administration, serving notice of his arrival to all of America, when, on January 12, 1987, he cancelled the holiday commemorating the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. He was certain—he would always be certain—that this was the type of tough-minded action previous fily-livered administrations had made inevitable. "I rescinded the politically motivated, illegally executed order of my predecessor knowing full well that I would be criticized by narrow-minded persons who are totally intolerant of those who disagree with their own biased opinions."

There's no reason to suspect that Mecham really had any idea how much attention his gesture would gather, and there's no reason to believe he would have done any differently if he'd known. An overrated troublemaker, Martin Luther King had been the kind of Communist-duped agitator he had warned Arizonans against for years. "He's been blown up by others," Mecham said, "and doesn't deserve a holiday."

Doctor King wasn't the only undeserving one. "What the blacks need is jobs. They don't need another holiday," said Ev. Ev didn't state whether he felt blacks would be inclined to actually work if they had jobs, but that was probably just because nobody had asked. The Mormon Church had denied full participation to blacks until the late Seventies. Skousen's book, *The Making of America*, clarified matters: "If the pickaninnies ran naked, it was generally from choice, and when the white boys had to put on shoes and go away to school, they were likely to envy the freedom of their colored playmates." Prepared for the Bicentennial, the book pondered the problems created for whites by slaves who were "shiftless" and "criminally inclined," concluding that the owners of slaves were slavery's worst victims.

The new governor had a heck of a time getting a handle on why any of this was so upsetting to so many people. "As I was a boy growing up, blacks themselves referred to their children as pickaninnies." In the wake of the King Day cancellation, all types of organizations were cancelling their plans to hold meetings and conventions in sunny Arizona. The National Basketball Association was among them. "Well," Ev said, "the NBA, I guess they forget how many white people they get coming to watch them play."

Then Ev struck a note that rang true in the hearts of many an Arizonan, native and newcomer alike. To live in Arizona was a vote of rejection from whatever damn place one had come from, from whatever damn place any sensible person would have already moved. "Are we such a bunch of wimps that we listen to people who say 'We're going to come in from the outside and tell you how to run your political machinery in Arizona?'" With



Jon Cipe

Ev wasn't the first Arizona car dealer to run for governor.

the imperiousness of a man who believed he was governor through the intercession of divine will, he simply dismissed those benighted souls who failed to agree with him. "When we start talking about the negatives of all the people that are not going to come to Arizona, I declare that totally a non-issue." Totally.

It didn't take long for a Recall Mecham movement to arise, primarily in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona's two major metropolitan areas. Ed Buck, the founder of the Recall movement, is gay. That fact made everything plain as day to Ev Mecham. "The church I belong to does not allow homosexuals to participate under any circumstances." He was positive—he would always be positive—of where he stood, and he knew it was his duty to share his expertise with those less informed than himself. "I do not believe that it is a legitimate alternative lifestyle. I think it's a whole different deal." And as for a movement that would dare try to remove a duly elected—not to mention divinely ordained—Arizona governor: "Well, if a band of homosexuals and a few dissident Democrats can do that, why, heavens, the state deserves what it gets."

"Ev doesn't like the idea of communists parked in his nation's back yard."

—from "The Governor's Report to the People of Arizona," September, 1987

Throughout a life spent on the outside glaring in, Ev Mecham had seen a government that was corrupt,

whenever it wasn't an out-and-out conspiracy against righteousness. There's no underestimating the appeal of such a vision to Arizonans. Ev swept into office with a reformer's glint in his eye, bound and determined—he would always be determined—to clean house. In April, he announced, "We have put together a team of managers that are the best this state has seen to date. We have a careful selection process and do a careful background check on every one to make sure their history is clear."

One of his earliest appointments had been Alberto Rodriguez as director of the Department of Liquor Licenses and Control. "I believe Al will do a good job of enforcement," the Governor said. As a cop in Douglas, Arizona, Al had done such a good job of enforcement he was under investigation for murder by the state's attorney general. He was believed to have chased a suspect across the border into Mexico, and then to have executed him. The charge was eventually dismissed because the shooting took place in Mexico, where Arizona lacks jurisdiction. "He's highly qualified," Ev said, "and his training, his background, everything, is very good."

Ev selected Ralph Waite as Director of the Department of Revenue. "Rex is very well-positioned in the business world. Normally we wouldn't be able to entice a man of his qualifications with the salary we're willing to pay." Waite's Southwestern Bank had bombed six years before, but he was currently in charge of his own ice cream parlor.

Concerned with his image among minorities, Ev chose Zoe Soto as his liaison to the Hispanic community. A former Miss Latin Arizona, Zoe was perhaps best known to those in the Hispanic community who knew her at all as the weather gal on tiny KTVW, Channel 33. "I was so dazzled by her beauty, I hired her on the spot," Smilin' Ev said.

Zoe was every bit as taken with Ev. "In a meeting after I had already said yes [to Mecham's job offer], somebody said to him, 'Governor, do you happen

to know Zoe is a Mormon?" And he said, "Oh, my gosh!" and kind of rolled his eyes, chuckled, and said something like, "Well, she's so valuable that we'll go ahead and take her."

The governor appointed Ada Thomas, a member of Phyllis Schlafly's famed anti-feminist group, the Eagle Forum, to the Board of Education. (The presidents of Arizona's three state universities were nice guys, Ev said, but you wouldn't want them running your business.) Thomas told the Senate Education Committee: "I feel really sorry for women who have to support their children. If they were really good mothers and didn't want extra money—they didn't want a cabin or whatever—[they] might be able to stay home with their children."

Many voters hadn't realized the Arizona Governor's office was a hot seat of international diplomacy. Ev Mecham had known it all along. Disturbed by the dark hordes infiltrating Arizona from Mexico, he proposed sending the National Guard to protect the border. He flew to Taiwan to meet with the World Anti-Communist League, an organization devoted to the imminent overthrow of Communist China. Two months later, hoping to stimulate trade, he returned to Taiwan, where the locals had yet to be introduced to the glories of turquoise jewelry. Before the year was over, he would vindicate his reputation as a foreign affairs visionary; months before the left-leaning President of the United States swiped Ev's idea, Mecham urged the Arizona legislature to allow him to turn the National Guard loose on Honduras.

The Governor was not pleased with the press coverage he was receiving. *The Arizona Republic*, the state's dominant newspaper, has long been noted for a political outlook best defined as Neo-Paleolithic, but Ev Mecham had always been sure—he was nothing if not sure—that the *Republic* was leading Arizonans down the dark road of Godless socialism. The *Mesa Tribune*, although deathly afraid of offending its Mormon readers, seemed to Mecham to be in cahoots with the all the rest of the First Amendment fanatics who hide behind the Bill of Rights. Ev banned political columnist John Kolbe from his press conferences. "As far as I'm concerned, he's a non-person." When the *Republic* referred to his wife's outfit at a reception in Nicaragua as "tacky," he cancelled his subscription. Dismayed by his appearances in Garry Trudeau's "Doonesbury" comic strip, he was even further dismayed to discover, upon careful investigation, that he would be unable to sue the cartoonist for "inaccuracy." "I'm not sure but what maybe we have become a bit too much of a democracy," he told a gathering of his beloved National Guard, assembled to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the U.S. Constitution.

Battle lines were being drawn, and Evan Mecham's hand held the crayon. To Mecham—and to many, many Arizonans—the conviction that came from being in a pitched battle against the Powers That Be, the Special Interests, the Press, the Forces That Are Dragging This Great Land of Ours Through the Permissive Muck of Corruption, was a feeling of infinite comfort. Although the landscape was complicated somewhat with a scattering of non-persons and a sprinkling of non-issues, in his heart Ev Mecham believed that the good people of Arizona stood foursquare behind him in his battle against the Forces of Darkness. He even knew precisely who the good people of Arizona were. "The good people are the ones who don't have a special axe to grind. The good people are the ones who have a good moral agenda in life."

It was the kind of pronouncement that could set a person—only a Bad Person, of course—to wondering. A bad person, a Gentile, wasn't likely to

"He's been blown up by others and doesn't deserve a holiday," Mecham said of Martin Luther King, Jr.

know much about the tenets of Mormon belief, would probably be hard-pressed to name many Mormons other than Donny and Marie and Ev. But from the time a young Mormon boy is brought to the patriarch for the blessing that sends him forth as a man, life has been direct and simple, cut and dried, good and evil. "Thou art a blessing to thy family," he is told, "...and thou shalt be sought after in counsel and advice, and thou shalt become a leader among men... Thy voice shall be as a two-edged sword and the hearts of the people shall be pricked and thou shalt lead many into the waters of baptism..."

It says absolutely nothing in there about selling Pontiac Bonneville's, but you can see how you'd feel justified all the same. Not long after this benediction, the Mormon male bicycles off on his mission, two or three years of wearing white shirts and black ties and bringing the message of the Angel Moroni to the heathen Gentiles of far-off places like Phoenix and Tucson and San Diego. Mormons believe you can reach back into the past and give dearly departed spirits a shove in the right direction, rebaptizing the dead properly as Mormons, just the way they no doubt would have wanted if they'd only had the chance before they bought the grassy plot.

"There is no known discrimination in Arizona."

—Governor Evan Mecham

He knew—it was all he knew—how to attack. He hadn't managed much governing yet, but he understood a strong offense. Using a right-wing mailing list, Mecham mailed a letter to 25,000 good Americans, asking them "to pick up and move to Arizona." It was the type of selfless action any true patriot would leap at in times of true distress. "That's right," the letter said, "I want you to sell your house, pack your belongings, quit your job, and come to the most beautiful state in the Union." He needed a million bucks in contributions, too, and quick. "Without it, I will risk being crushed by the millions of dollars the militant liberals and the homosexual lobby plan to spend against me."

The recall movement would succeed in gathering far more signatures than necessary. Ev would stand firm. The state senate would convene for an impeachment trial, ceasing all other business for week after week. Ev would stand firm. He saw the conspiracy for what it was: a desperate last-ditch effort by the forces of corruption, a limp-wristed slap of the purse from diseased sodomites, an apocalyptic Shriner's convention of demons and bad people and special interests and dissident Democrats, each and every one of them deathly afraid of a man who wielded the sword of truth and the shield of fact.

It was sheer slapstick, a soap opera starring idiots, and the longer it lasted, the louder the laughs, the less funny it seemed. The radio call-in shows featured call after call from the good people of Arizona, and most of them seemed certain—as certain as Ev himself—that their governor was being railroaded, that the trial was a mockery, that justice

was being trampled in the dust.

Ev Mecham had no intention of giving in to those who would destroy his mission. Pestered by reporters who insisted on quoting him out of context—which is to say without printing the entirety of his ramblings verbatim—Ev created a tabloid of his own called *The Governor's Report to the People of Arizona*, in September '87. A headline: "Mecham Suffers from Selective Reporting." After publication, he placed his number one ad salesman in charge of juvenile education at the Department of Corrections. A Mecham support group distributed fliers urging citizens to avoid the recall petitioners: "Be warned, you may get AIDS if the person that offers you the pen and petition to sign is a homosexual with the AIDS virus... Don't gamble by bringing the virus into your home, a scratch on the skin can be infected. The volunteer may be a homosexual virus carrier. Protect your loved ones, be sensible and walk away."

Kip Shippy, a high school student from Mesa, organized an Evan Mecham Fan Club, offering interviews attacking the recall movement as a homosexual plot. Kip found it necessary to leave his volunteer job in the governor's office when it was revealed that he was a convicted child molester. "We're not distancing ourselves from Kip," said Ron Bellus, Mecham's press secretary. "We never really opened our arms to him." Mecham Party Chairman Burt Kruglick said, "He's corrected himself. He's not doing it anymore. I don't see how you can compare this to someone who's a homosexual and continues to be a homosexual." Shippy's victim had, after all, been an eight-year-old girl.

It was up to Ev to offer the final word. "It wasn't embarrassing to me... It didn't have any effect on me and my administration. I've never been a child molester. I got a clean life. Why should it affect me?"

Ev had used discretionary funds for an \$80,000 loan to his Pontiac dealership, but he saw no problem with that. Hadn't they been at his discretion? Wasn't he the governor? He was removed from his office at the Capitol building, but he stood firm, establishing himself as self-proclaimed governor-in-exile at home in Glendale. And the good people of Arizona, senior citizens in Sun City and Mesa, weathered natives in Yuma and Show Low and Skull Valley, newcomers in Phoenix and Flagstaff and Bullhead City, were convinced that the liberal conspiracy's tentacles had finally gathered up even Arizona. Even Arizona!

The impeachment trial was a mess, a marvel, a monument to electoral politics at their most incompetent. Televised daily, state senators found the possibilities for grandstanding too much of a temptation to pass up. A private detective, divorced only six times herself, testified scornfully about her affair with Mecham's nemesis, the head of the Department of Public Safety; hustled off the stand, she raced over to the nearest radio call-in show. The good people were even more convinced than ever before. A frame-up was taking place.

And through it all, Ev stood firm. He had expected tribulations and even trials when he took the job. He knew he was destined to lead, to triumph, to save his people from the unrighteous. He knew that he would come out of the wilderness of Glendale and resume his rightful place on the Ninth Floor as Governor of the great State of Arizona, even better prepared to rule than before. "I will be in a position to do a great deal better job and, I think, get along and do a more and more effective job. I guess you could say they'll say this is another one of those gaffes, but a lot of the rats have come out of their holes that have been after me, and now we know a lot more who they are."

PRYOR from page 49

She was a Sophia Loren type from a poor family. She wore me out. She called me daddy. When she would come, she would faint.

LEE: How flattering.

PRYOR: I thought I killed her. She was special.

LEE: You used to tell me about a woman who would balance herself on a terrace railing way above the streets in New York City.

PRYOR: Yeah, she would do that. Scare the hell out of me. She would get drunk and balance herself on these thin rails. I found the best way to get her down was to ignore her.

LEE: She was a hooker, wasn't she? And your lover.

PRYOR: Yeah.

LEE: Did she ever fall?

PRYOR: Not when she was with me, thank God. I'd have had a hard time explaining to the police about a white woman smashed on the sidewalk.

LEE: So what is your mindset on sex these days? What is a good experience for you now?

PRYOR: Laying in someone's arms after making love. Talking, laughing, being OK together afterwards. Why is this sex topic so important?

LEE: Not important, interesting. You know what they say about black men: "Once black, you can't go back."

PRYOR: No one ever said that to me. [laughs] I think it's a little shallow, for fools.

LEE: I think it's interesting how a person handles a question like that.

PRYOR: Okay, baby—so people will read it and say, "Look at that heavy, deep, profound motherfucker..."

LEE: Do you have any regrets, Richard?

PRYOR: Doesn't everybody?

LEE: Have you learned from your mistakes?

PRYOR: I have learned to identify them as the same mistake: "Oh, I was here before..." People say they wouldn't change a thing—that they'd do it all over again the same way. Well, of course that's the way it has to be done. I accept it all. I also accept the joyousness.

LEE: What's your ultimate fear?

PRYOR: Dying. When you can't reach something that will save you, that kind of death. And then maybe I don't have a fear. There are times when I'm afraid of not being afraid; when I'll act more afraid than I am so I belong.

LEE: So where's all this going—your life, that is?

PRYOR: It's going to end up dead, but in-between. If God blesses you, there can be some joy and life. And you can make some friends.

LEE: Do you believe in voodoo?

PRYOR: I know you put some spell on me while we were in the islands. I went to a lady and had it taken off.

LEE: Remember my Jesus box?

PRYOR: You can't fuck with anybody with a Jesus box! I'm glad you're doing this. I like you.

LEE: I like you too. Anything else?

PRYOR: The brilliance comes from God. I am just a receiver. In the past, I've put it in jeopardy, but now I know not to be careless and fuck with it. There is a higher order. We are the only species that has a congress.

LEE: Is that it?

PRYOR: One last thing: I don't do interviews. I did this because you asked me. And you hurt me bad with that *People* article. So I am trusting you. You have an opportunity to redeem yourself.

LEE: I think we both do.

PRYOR: And remember: it's just a movie.

FRANK from page 54


musical. Somebody like Dr. John has a great sense of language. Everything he says is poetry. You give him a set of lines, but he spontaneously improvises. And that's the way it should be. It's best when people find their own way into the words or else it ends up sounding like 'Masterpiece Theater' or something."

The sun is setting on the Bowery. At CBGB's, a punk band is running through its sound check, and around the corner Robert Frank is saying why he never goes to the club, even though he likes the music about as much as he manages to like anything else. "It's far too loud for me," he says. "I feel like an asshole in there. I usually feel like I'm 100, but in there I feel like I'm 150."

He finishes his coffee and squirms in his seat, impatient for the interview to end. It seems like he is doing it only to appease the people who put up the money for his film. In a sense, though, you wonder what he's really got left to say. After all, as much as it's anything, *Candy Mountain* is his story.

Perhaps because the movie is so autobiographical, its ending was especially important to Frank. Everybody wants to write his own epitaph, and when you get the chance you choose your words with care. Without giving anything away, suffice it to say that all the problems do not get neatly resolved. In this film, as in life, the good guys are hard to tell from the bad ones, and nobody is a clear winner. "When you're at the end of the road and you have to make up your mind about what you want to do, to not become a hero can be hard," Frank softly says, of Elmore. "But I was sure that the old man would not end up to be a hero."

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SPIN

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**SPIN. AIN'T TOO PROUD TO
BEG.**



The Perfect Kiss

New Order has survived its past and its mythology, and entertained royalty at an L.A. fashion show. Now it wants children.

Article by Barry Walters

The high-energy Substance proudly hails as New Order's highest charting LP to date, while proving what aerobics instructors from Jane Fonda on down have known for years—feet move and spirits soar to New Order.

—New Order press release

Black ties and soap opera hairstyles are in full effect at the Stock Exchange in Los Angeles—long ones, bleached ones, blow-dried, feathered, teased ones: Joan Collins do's turning in unison as a line of models trots down a makeshift runway. Amid the hair-spray, the Duke and Duchess of York, Prince Andrew and Princess Fergie, give their undivided royal attention. After a few outfits, the models take a break, and as part of this UK/LA Fashion Exchange, New Order step up to provide the evening's musical entertainment.

The soap opera do's watch the world's greatest rock 'n' disco band, and, for a while, don't know what to do. The alternative rockers open with their Top 40 hit, "True Faith," typically ragged. Singer Bernard Sumner is clad in a shoulder-padded suit. Drummer Steven Morris and his girlfriend, guitarist/keyboardist Gillian Gilbert, are similarly starched. Peter

Hook favors a dressed-down look—motorcycle boots, leather pants, and sleeveless T. He's playing his bass at knee-level. He could be in Judas Priest. The song ends. Fergie and Company clap politely. The quartet launches into a new, untitled composition. The Dallas do's turn from the stage to engage the black ties in cocktail conversation. Fergie and Andrew try to remain interested. New Order leave the stage. The fashion show resumes.

"It seemed like a completely wacky thing to do," reflects Morris two days later, while trying to digest his morning bagel and cream cheese at a poolside hotel café. Contrary to the somber New Order legend, Morris is a chipper, chatty fellow. Even in his black biker jacket and Andy Warhol T-Shirt, Morris has the air of a nice boy you could take home to meet the folks.

How did this ex-punk rocker like meeting royalty?

"Well, we pay 'em to be nice to people."

Still cynical but now sanguine, New Order are finally enjoying major American popularity. *Substance*, a

Above: Bernard Sumner. Right: Peter Hook, New Order's unreconstructed punk. Go ahead, spit on him.





Peter Hook is the member who clings to the idea of New Order as "some kind of punk band."

I was still living with my parents. That was quite weird, 'cause you live with your parents and work with the group—two completely different things."

Do you want children?

"I don't know quite when we'd manage to squeeze 'em in," Morris responds with more mock drama. "Before the album or after the soundtrack?" Then, completely serious, almost under his breath: "That's one of the things that isn't very good."

Gilbert confesses, "Being in a group, you think, well, in a couple years, but it never happens."

"It's just that everyone else has them," Morris interjects sadly.

"And you feel jealous of them, in a way," Gilbert continues. "Because the other members have wives and kids and things and you've seen it all happen. You've met all the girlfriends. They get houses and then they have kids. They have another life. You haven't got that. You've just got us two all the time and that gets a bit much, really. Because if you did decide to have kids, it's a big responsibility—not just to you, but to the other members of the band as well, because they can always leave their kids. But if we had them, what could you do? You'd either not see 'em for half a year, or you bring 'em with you. I can't even look after me self!"

Are the other members married?

"Only Barney's married, but he might be going through divorce, so it's a touchy subject," explains Gilbert. "He has a little boy, James, who's five. Peter's daughter, Heather, is three."

Bernard Sumner, or Barney, as he's often called, approaches the table to join us. Like Morris and Gilbert, Sumner's on the diminutive side. Though in his early thirties, he still looks like a little boy; maybe *Winnie-the-Pooh's* Christopher Robin with a spiky bleach job. Whereas Morris and Gilbert tend to express themselves with rambling phrases, Sumner is to the point.

'There's a fly in my egg,' he tells the waiter.

Why is it that no other Factory band has had the success that you've had?

"'Cause they're no bleedin' good," says Sumner.

Why is Manchester the home of so many introspective bands like the Buzzcocks, Magazine, Joy Division, and the Smiths?

"I think if you're a loud person in Manchester," Sumner reflects, "you tend to get beat up. 'Cause there's a lot of thick bastards there, and people who like to go out and fight. The people who aren't like that don't have any place to exist. So they go off and form a group or write or go to the Hacienda [the club New Order owns with their English label, Factory]."

New Order's deal with Factory Records is something even Michael Jackson couldn't hope for. The band gets 60 percent of all royalties, and has so much money coming that, according to Morris, they have to do some things for free so Factory can catch up enough to pay them. New Order's ties with Factory work in much the same way as the relationship between bigtime rappers like Run-D.M.C. and independent labels such as Profile. They support the record company—rather than the other way around—and in turn, beat the majors at their own game.

"Hip hop, when it started, had parallels with

double LP of all their dance singles, has gone gold after months at the bottom of the Top 50. Quincy Jones has just remixed "Blue Monday," one of the top-selling singles ever in England, for his Qwest label, which licenses New Order records for America. Back home, the group's former incarnation, Joy Division, is the subject of a much-publicized book, *An Ideal for Living*, as well as their own newly-released singles compilation, also called *Substance*. "New Order," says Peter Hook, "aren't the voice of a generation. They're the people you put on after all that other bullshit."

Gillian Gilbert joins her boyfriend at the shaded table and sips a Perrier. Except for a bright burgundy rinse in her hair, there's nothing about Gilbert to indicate that she's in a sometimes moody new wave band with a suicide in its past. Her flower print terrycloth pullover could be your mom's. Very cool.

"I'm really quite happy to be thought of as one of the guys," Gilbert says. "Because, you know, it really annoys me how people sort of pick you out. You get picked on just because you are a woman."

"Most women in bands are a sales gimmick any-

New Order, persons of substance: (L-R) Steven Morris, Bernard Sumner, Gillian Gilbert, Peter Hook.

way," explains Morris, trying to keep the peace. In her own mild-mannered way, Gilbert is having none of it.

"I mean, I don't like dressing up and being glamorous, 'cause I'm not, and I never will be. I don't mind being in the background, because all that's important to me is the music and being part of the music. It just upsets me when people start making a big deal out of it. Why aren't you as equal as everybody else?"

How does it work, being in a band and being in a couple?

"It makes us half the band!" Morris exclaims. "It seems like we'd be on top of each other all the time, but it's quite nice, really. You save money—they can stuff you both into one room."

Are you married?

"We've had no time!" Morris sighs.

"We've been together ten years," Gilbert volunteers. "When we joined we weren't living together.

Julien Borofsky/Beno Ltd.

punk in Britain," Morris theorizes. "In a way, it was an American answer to it. There's only so many permutations you can do with three chords. But there's only so many permutations you can do with two record decks and a tape machine."

Since Ian Curtis hung himself in 1980, and Joy Division became New Order, the survivors have been one of the few groups to truly function as a group. They have no figurehead.

Does anyone wish he or she were in the spotlight?

Morris: No.

Sumner: Peter's not here. (Suggestively) Ask him.

SPIN: Peter often looks like he's in another group. (This brings loads of laughs.)

Sumner: Well—

Gilbert: No comment. (More giggles)

Peter Hook comes over and escorts me to the pool's chaise-lounges so he can catch some rays. He takes off his terrycloth bathrobe, and is now barely saved from indecency by a bright pair of Speedo bikini briefs. Unlike his groupmates, who, as typical English people, are ghostly pale, Hook looks like an L.A. native—bronze everywhere, and he's obviously been to the gym. With his stubbly beard and Sun-In streaks of blond hair, he resembles another rocker, who's gone public about his love of Joy Division and New Order: George Michael.

"George Michael's been looking a bit like me," says Hook. "It's funny, 'cause he asked us to support him in Europe. He's a very close friend of Peter Saville, who does our sleeves. Pete always tells, 'Ah, you'd really like him a lot. He's just like you lot.' So, actually, this tour should be quite good."

Hook, or Hooky as his friends call him, is the member most responsible for New Order's reputation for unpredictability. It's Hook that most clings to the idea of New Order as "some kind of punk band." The last time we met, when New Order played the Paradise Garage, a now-defunct black and largely gay New York disco, Hook intruded on my conversation with Sumner by waving his penis in my face.

"Whew! I don't remember that one!" Hook snorts.

Do you become a different person when you drink?

"I tend to go a bit morose when I'm drunk. It doesn't uplift me. It's only the other stuff that makes me obnoxious," Hook exclaims.

What's the other stuff?

"I'll leave that to your imagination. I tend to stay away from it. I don't enjoy it. A lot of the time, you just drink out of boredom. If I was with the wife and child, I wouldn't be drinking at all. It can be a very slippery slope, as many people have found out."

How do you like being a father?

"It's put a whole new complexion on life. I heartily recommend fatherhood. Even the bit before's not bad."

Does your little girl look like you?

"I don't think so. She's got my butt though."

Is it true that the band did a commercial for Sunkist?

"They asked us to try it. So we tried it and it sounded so bad that we couldn't let them have it. They originally told us they wanted to use 'Blue Monday' and we thought, 'Fine. Great.' So then they said, 'Right, when are you gonna do this voice over?' Voice over? We tried singing the changed lyrics and we started rolling around on the floor. They were offering us a fortune, but the cringe part of it was too heavy."

What were the changed lyrics?

"Sunkist is the one," Hook says through clenched teeth. "Oh, never mind." ☺

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LADY OF THE CANYON

A few things about Joni Mitchell

She was born in Ft. MacLeod, Alberta, Canada, on November 7, 1943. She had no brothers or sisters and was afflicted with a series of illnesses, which made for an isolated and lonely childhood. Her debut album, *Song to a Seagull*, was released in 1968; three albums later she released the record the critics still rave about, *Blue*, and in 1974 came her commercial blockbuster, *Court and Spark*. Her music moved in an increasingly experimental direction with the eight albums that followed, none of which were as enthusiastically received as Joni's "Raised on Robbery" phase. Six years ago she married jazz musician Larry Klein, with whom she coproduced her last album and her new one, *Chalk Marks in a Rain Storm*. They live in Malibu. Joni thinks of herself as a visual artist first and a musician second, and a good amount of her time is given over to painting. She's something of a clothes horse; the day we talk, she's swathed in layers of fabric of varying textures and shades of rust and gray. She's wearing a bowler hat and has her hair in braids and she looks cute. She arrives hungry and sends out for a tuna sandwich and chain smokes. She's forthcoming and unpretentious; but she's not the sort to kiss and tell and doesn't name-drop. She laughs a lot and speaks of her husband often, with respect and affection. The lady of the canyon with the beautifully broken heart appears to have found her refuge.

Are there themes you were preoccupied with in your early work that no longer seem so compelling to you?

I certainly don't have the attitude, "Oh, I know all about that," because you never know all about anything. In your forties, your life becomes epic and things you experienced in your twenties come around again but the nuances are different. I can't think of any theme that's expired for me except the search for love, because I'm happily married now. Your husband Larry Klein coproduced your

last album, *Dog Eat Dog*. Since you hired him again I assume that you enjoy collaborating. With the making of *Dog Eat Dog*, I was pressured for the first time in my career to make some kind of change. My manager at that time—I've since switched management—almost insisted that I be produced. I felt they were trying to laminate me to someone who was popular at the time and I found that insulting. I don't want to be interior decorated out of my music—I'm a composer, not a pop star who can be decorated into fashion. So we argued and argued and producers were paraded through, but my husband and I remained convinced we could do the job with the assistance of a good engineer and a keyboard man who could set up sounds for us. The keyboardist we chose was Thomas Dolby—and it was not a successful collaboration. Thomas accepted the job fully aware that he was to set up sounds then relinquish the keyboards to me, and though he said that would be a pleasure, in the end he couldn't handle it.

Making that album was like being in a band because there were three heads—my husband, Thomas Dolby, and the engineer Mike Shipley—none of whom agreed with my approach to the studio. I feel that when you enter the studio you must allow an idea—even ideas that initially appear to be bad—to run until you recognize that it either succeeds or fails. You can't kill it off before you've even begun because that's the only way you discover anything. Anyhow, working with them I had critics around at the beginning of an idea for the first time in my career and that was very difficult for me.

What was the central idea you had when you went into the studio to make this record? I don't work that way. I discover what I'm up to in the process of doing it and never know where I'm headed when I begin. To watch me work you'd be apt to think I don't know what I'm doing—and in a way I don't, but that's part of the process. Not knowing is an open-minded state that allows things to come to you.

How would you describe the mood of the record?

It's an emotionally complex record and how dark you find it probably depends on what you bring to it when you hear it. For me, it's neither optimistic nor pessimistic, but rather, is a series of characters commenting on different times. The female narrator in "The Tea Leaf Prophecy" comments on life in the Forties, after the bombing of Hiroshima. The central character in "The Beating of Black Wings" is a kid who's been to Vietnam and he talks about war. "Dancing Clown" is a couple of guys standing on a corner watching a beautiful girl go by.

How did you go about selecting the guest players on the album?

Some of the recording was done at Peter Gabriel's studio, which I'd borrowed because it happened to be near a studio where my husband was working. Peter dropped by one day so I put him to work. My husband was working with Ben Orr, who has a rich baritone that he rarely uses, so I put him to work. Basically I make use of what's at hand; James Taylor and Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young were around when I was making my earlier records and I put them to work. What I did do on this record that I'd never done before was seek out singers I didn't know personally, because I thought they were suited to the song—Billy Idol and Willie Nelson fall into this category. I saw Billy at the Grammys a few years ago and thought he was a great rock 'n' roll singer, so I called him and he came down the next night. He was a delight to work with. I've always loved Willie Nelson's voice and met him at Farm Aid, but I didn't really know him when I invited him to sing on the album. Tom Petty sings a very small part, which I offered him with an apology because it is such a small part. But he came in and sang it and was great about it. Prince had been inviting me to attend a lot of things and wrote a song for me called "(You Are) My Emotional Pump." I didn't cut it but I like his music and think he's the greatest

Interview by Kristine McKenna

Photography by Norman Seeff

performer I've ever seen. His timing is amazing. Anyhow, I met Wendy & Lisa through Prince. We'd seen each other socially—at dinners and so forth—and wound up working at the same studio. With Wendy & Lisa it was a case of meeting by the coffee machine and saying hey, how'd you like to sing some backgrounds?

The song "Number One" is a reflection on fame and the roller coaster of success and failure. How do you feel about the way your career has unfolded? You were very high profile for a few years, then you seemed to intentionally step out of the spotlight. It's widely assumed that one of the reasons you moved into jazz was to escape the pop rat race. I moved into jazz because pop musicians didn't

"Music helps people carry the load of life.

We all know that we are bound to die, but while going toward that end, we'd like to have a good time."



have the harmonic sophistication my music requires. They couldn't understand what they described as "Jon's weird chords," and it's true that my sense of harmony is somewhat unusual. Chaka Khan once told me my chords were like questions, and in fact, I've always thought of them as chords of inquiry. My emotional life is quite complex, and I try to reflect that in my music. For instance, a minor chord is pure tragedy; in order to infuse it with a thread of optimism you add an odd string to the chord to carry the voice of hope. Then perhaps you add a dissonant because in the stressful society we live in dissonance is aggressing against us at every moment. So, there's an inquiry to the chords comparable to the unresolved quality of much poetry. The song "The Reoccurring Dream" makes the point that material things are ultimately without value, and throughout your career your music has stressed the importance of spirituality over worldly goods. And yet, I've got the impression that you live in a world of luxury and beautiful things. Yes, this is a great paradox. When I first got the money to acquire things, I firmly believed that luxury arrives as a guest and then becomes the master and I think there is an element of truth to that. In the early Seventies, I bought a piece of undeveloped land in Northern British Columbia. At that point the

madness of both sides of my family was manifesting itself in me—we have a tendency to give up on people and become anti-social hermits. Anyhow, I spent a summer up there living in an older fisherman's shack with plastic in the windows, bats hanging from the roof, and no electricity or running water, and I got so I could walk through the bushes at night without any fear. I wasn't afraid of the wilderness the way I was of cities. Last year my husband and I went up there with fourteen years having elapsed since that earlier summer and I found I couldn't swim in the ocean. It was so full of life and little things crawling around. We were planning to stay just two weeks but I told him I couldn't leave until I got over my fear. I was turning into a hothouse plant and losing my earthiness! So I stayed and scrubbed my copper pots squatting in the sun and got on friendly terms with nature again. We get into our vacuumed boxes and forget what it's like to lie down in dirt—that it's quite lovely. You once commented that the three great stimulants are artifice, brutality, and innocence. Can you elaborate on that?

That's an idea I borrowed from Nietzsche but I agree with it. I rarely wear flamboyant makeup but whenever I do, I have to peel people off of me—people who are responding to the seduction of arti-

fice. Face paint, hiking up the skirt—these are the flags of artifice. As for brutality, this culture is terrified of sex and thrives on decapitation. We're a culture of adrenal addicts and need ever larger doses of horror to get off, so movies like *Halloween III* make millions. And innocence? A businessman wakes up in his mid-40s, faded and thickskinned from battling for financial opportunity, and he yearns for what he has lost—his innocence. One of the recognizable characteristics of a culture in decline is the seduction of innocence.

But wouldn't you agree that to yearn for innocence is to have it in a sense?

If you want it in yourself, perhaps that's true. If you want it in your bed that's something else entirely. I get the impression you lead an extremely private life.

I do lead a private life and enjoy being able to move about with a degree of anonymity. The more high profile you are, the more lunatics you attract. Just having my house mentioned in connection with a recent storm in Malibu created problems. As soon as your name's on the news they come out of the woodwork. So no, I'm not out pounding the pavement. I'm a loner by nature and the kind of attention the Beatles received would be a nightmare for me. I never courted that kind of fame because I'm a back-bush Canadian. I come from small towns and was raised to believe that if you stick your head above ground, it'll probably get knocked off.

Speaking of high profile versus low profile, I assume you'll be touring.

There's some pressure being put on me to tour, but my last few performing experiences have been very unpleasant. I was doing benefits and I get eaten alive at benefits. At the Amnesty Benefit I was asked to go on at the last minute, so we rehearsed backstage with borrowed equipment and went on and did three songs, for which I received my annual Worst Of award from Rolling Stone—for years, Rolling Stone has been giving me a Worst Of something-or-other award every year. Anyway, people were throwing things at me at the Amnesty Benefit; then I did the Leonard Peltier Benefit where I was playing to Willie Nelson's audience. Everyone knows that audience comes to party, and I don't do well in that setting because my music is fragile and requires a more thoughtful setting. I don't make good-time boogie in the sun stuff and my music doesn't work in daylight. My audience is relatively small and when I do benefits I'm sandwiched between acts whose audiences are much bigger, so when I go on, they use the time to talk. It's left me feeling a bit shy about performing.

It sounds quite discouraging. How does this stuff affect your life on a daily basis? What's a typical day like for you?

There is no typical day. I may paint every day for a month, then not pick up a brush for weeks. Unfortunately, I'm not at all a creature of habit—I just sort of fall out of bed and into life.

What was the last album you bought?

Jimmy Cliff's *The Bongo Man Has Come*. I love the title track. I spend a lot of time in the Caribbean—at least I used to. That area of the map always tries to kill me! When I go there I invariably come home on a stretcher with some weird ailment or another. Anyhow, I listen to reggae when I go there.

What are your thoughts on the popular music scene right now?

All I can talk about are the things I miss in popular music right now. We're living in an era of specialization created by middle men, and I wish I could turn on the radio and hear an old Miles Davis cut followed by Edith Piaf then Chuck Berry then Mozart. No matter what station you turn on, you hear the first song and know that if you listen for six

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THE BEATLES: ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE • THE MONKEES: DAYDREAM BELIEVER • THE WHO: I CAN SEE FOR MILES •
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WHITE RABBIT • THE BEATLES: I AM THE WALRUS • BOB DYLAN: THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' • BUFFALO
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CREAM: SUNSHINE OF YOUR LOVE • THE BEATLES: TWIST & SHOUT • CHAMBERS BROTHERS: TIME HAS
COME TODAY • STEPPENWOLF: BORN TO BE WILD • BEN E. KING: STAND BY ME • CIRCUS MAXIMUS: THE
WIND • IRON BUTTERFLY: IN-A-GADDA-DA-VIDA • THE FOUR TOPS: I CAN'T HELP MYSELF • THE BEATLES: HEY
JUDE • SIMON & GARFUNKEL: SOUNDS OF SILENCE • THE HOLLIES: BUS STOP • THE TEMPTATIONS: MY
GIRL • THE SEARCHERS: NEEDLES & PINS • THE ZOMBIES: SHE'S NOT THERE • THE BEATLES: IN MY LIFE • THE
ROLLING STONES: SATISFACTION • BOB DYLAN: LIKE A ROLLING STONE • CROSBY STILLS & NASH: SUITE
JUDY BLUE EYES • THE BEATLES: I WANT TO HOLD YOUR HAND • PROCOL HARUM: WHITER SHADE OF
PALE • JIMI HENDRIX: PURPLE HAZE • THE BEACH BOYS: GOOD VIBRATIONS • THE BEATLES: A DAY IN THE LIFE • THE
ALICE'S RESTAURANT • THE BEACH BOYS: THE SMELL OF GASOLINE • THE BEATLES: HELLO GOODBYE • THE
MOODY BLUES: NIGHTS IN WHITE SATIN • THE BEATLES: SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL • ARLO GUTHRIE:
RASCALS: GOOD LOVIN' • BIG BROTHER & THE HOLDING COMPANY: PIECE OF MY HEART • THE
RIGHTeous BROTHERS: YOU'VE LOST THAT LOVIN' FEELIN' • THE BEATLES: STRAWBERRY FIELDS FOREV-
ER • THE TURTLES: HAPPY TOGETHER • SPENCER DAVIS GROUP: GIMME SOME LOVIN' • THE JEFFERSON
AIRPLANE: SOMEBODY TO LOVE • THE BYRDS: TURN TURN TURN • THE ROLLING STONES: LET'S
SPEND THE NIGHT TOGETHER • BOB DYLAN: POSITIVELY 4TH STREET • VANILLA FUDGE: YOU KEEP ME
HANGIN' ON • THE ROLLING STONES: DOCK OF THE BAY • THE BEATLES: SHE LOVES YOU • THE DOORS:
GROOVIN' • OTIS REDDING: DOCK OF THE BAY • THE BEATLES: WHITE LOTTA LOVE • GRAND
WHEN THE MUSIC'S OVER • ARTHUR BROWN: FIRE • CREAM: HELLO I LOVE YOU • THE WHO: PINBALL
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FLASH • BOB DYLAN: RAINY DAY WOMAN • JIMI HENDRIX: ALL ALONG THE WATCHTOWER • LED
ZEPPULIN: RAMBLE ON • THE ROLLING STONES: WILD HORSES • TOMMY JAMES: CRIMSON &
CLOVER • THE MCCOYS: HANG ON SLOOPY • LED ZEPPULIN: HEARTBREAKER/LIVING LOVING
MAID • DONOVAN: SUNSHINE SUPERMAN • SIMON & GARFUNKEL: BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER
• THE DOORS: BREAK ON THROUGH • SIMON & GARFUNKEL: CONFUSED • THE WHO: KIDS ARE
• THE BYRDS: EIGHT MILES HIGH • LED ZEPPULIN: DAZED & CONFUSED • THE WHO: ON THE ROAD
ALRIGHT • JIMI HENDRIX: FIRE • THE BEATLES: SGT. PEPPER • CANNED HEAT: ON THE ROAD
AGAIN • PAUL REVERE & THE RAIDERS: KICKS • SURFARIS: WIFE OUT • THE ROLLING STONES:
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Words from the Front



AZT may be as useless as it is toxic; The Presidential Commission on HIV takes on the rebel with a cause, Dr. Peter Duesberg; AL-721 is finally made available.

DOES AZT REALLY WORK?

AZT, the only drug approved by the FDA to be used specifically against AIDS, is so toxic that 50 percent of all AIDS patients simply cannot tolerate its severe side effects, which include suppression of bone marrow, nausea, headaches, insomnia, and dizziness.

But does it work? Surprisingly, in spite of the fact that thousands of AIDS, ARC, and now even HIV asymptomatic people are on it, we don't know. The mechanism by which AZT is said to work against AIDS is itself suspect. AZT supposedly attacks the HIV virus, the supposed cause of AIDS, preventing it from replicating and thereby preventing its spread to other cells in the body. It is known that AZT works to block the synthesis of DNA, the basic genetic material contained in every cell. But even if it is assumed that HIV is the cause of AIDS, no studies have shown that HIV-DNA synthesis is occurring in the cells of AIDS patients prior to their taking AZT. If HIV viral synthesis is not taking place, then AZT can certainly not be blocking such synthesis. This leads inevitably to one of two conclusions: that AZT is ineffective against AIDS, or that it may be effective but does not work by attacking the HIV virus.

The presumed "efficacy" of AZT in "prolonging" the lives of AIDS patients is based on a single double blind placebo study, conducted in 1986, that was flawed by several factors. First, as soon as the participants realized who was getting placebo and who wasn't, the study was "unblinded." Patients admitted to pooling their supplies, in order to increase the collective chance of improvement. Second, the number of subjects was very low (282), and they were studied over a very short period of time (17 weeks). And third, the record-keeping was so sloppy that it is said to have verged on falsification of data.

"That study means nothing," says Dr. Joseph

Column by Celia Farber

Illustration by Tony Limuaco

Sonnabend, a leading AIDS physician who has written a 300-page critique of the study that propelled the FDA to rush AZT through the approval process. "I think it is absolutely demoralizing to administer a drug that is so incompatible with life."

Despite the questionable studies and its extreme toxicity, AZT is now being given to people who test positive for HIV antibodies but have no actual disease symptoms. 1500 sero-positive, asymptomatic people are currently taking part in a three-year study under the joint auspices of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), and Burroughs-Wellcome, the manufacturers of AZT.

According to noted hematologist Charles Zaroulis, AZT presents the prospect of "high toxicity with a very narrow risk-benefit ratio." In other words, although the drug may be the only option in severe cases of AIDS, it is too toxic to be worth the side effects in milder cases. "I see no data suggesting that AZT will prevent the onset of symptoms," Zaroulis says flatly. "This particular agent is too toxic to be used as a prophylactic [preventive measure]."

It is not surprising that Burroughs-Wellcome sees things differently. David W. Barry, Vice President for Research at Burroughs does not consider the prescription of AZT for asymptomatic seropositive cases to be prophylactic use. "It is much better to treat any disease with medication—but especially with AIDS and AZT—before the symptoms become severe," he says. He refers to this as "suppressive therapy," reasoning that since HIV is the cause of AIDS, anyone who has antibodies to the virus has the disease, and can be helped by AZT. "I don't think the study is arguable," he adds. "The NIAID have looked at the data and confirmed the findings."

When asked to comment on the suggestion that HIV may not be the cause, or the only cause of AIDS, Dr. Barry's response was immediate and firm. "I am sure HIV is the cause of AIDS," Dr. Zaroulis, when asked, hesitated a moment. "I think it is a cause of AIDS," he said. "However, I will keep an open mind. A lot of precepts we had lived with comfortably are changing with this disease."

—Philip Harris

DEALING WITH DUESBERG

On February 20th, in New York City, the Presidential Commission on the HIV Epidemic finally allowed testimony by Dr. Peter Duesberg—the Berkeley molecular biologist who is so convinced that HIV doesn't cause AIDS that he has offered to be injected with it (see SPIN interview, January). Duesberg, the most distinguished critic of the HIV-AIDS theory, has become one of the most talked about scientists in the AIDS arena.

In his address in the large, crowded room, Duesberg repeated succinctly what he told SPIN:

"Although the theory that HIV is the cause of AIDS is the basis for a billion dollar research effort, massive AIDS testing, toxic AZT therapy, and even suicide and house burning, it was never proven. HIV does not fulfill any of the requirements necessary to prove it is responsible for the epidemic."

Dr. Frank Lilly, the only scientist on the Commission, launched a prepared counterattack, reading off a list of speculative rebuttals of Duesberg's points. Surprisingly, however, Lilly conceded that there is "a slight possibility that you may be right. The evidence that HIV causes AIDS to date is, in fact, circumstantial."

Duesberg's attack on the HIV-AIDS theory has redirected the ongoing debate within the medical and scientific communities.

"I work with mouse leukemia viruses. I try to keep up with HIV studies, but I don't profess to be an expert." —Dr. Frank Lilly, The Presidential Commission on the HIV Epidemic

Here are some key points where the medical establishment and Duesberg are in disagreement:

Theory: HIV, the AIDS virus, enters the body and lies low for seven years or more, then reactivates. **Duesberg:** No evidence of active virus in those sick with AIDS has ever been found. HIV enters the body, sometimes causes mild mono-like symptoms, then is permanently suppressed by the body's defenses. Anyone who tests "antibody positive" is in fact inoculated by the virus. Afterwards, only negligible amounts of virus are ever present.

Theory: The HIV virus kills the T-4 cells of the immune system, and leaves the body open to fatal infections.

Duesberg: There is no evidence after four years of intensive research that HIV can kill T-4 cells in the body. Elaborate theories have been spun to suggest how HIV might do it, but so far without evidence.

HIV has been shown only to kill T-4 cells in laboratory dishes under special conditions not possible in AIDS patients.

Theory: While it is not yet understood how HIV kills people, it is heavily associated with the disease, for as many as 90 percent of sick AIDS patients have been exposed to the virus.

Duesberg: The CDC recently added three categories of people to its count of AIDS sick patients, for whom no evidence of the virus being present can

be found. Four thousand, or about one quarter, of the new AIDS sick cases counted in the past year were in these groups, free of the virus.

No virus can be isolated from half of the people who test antibody positive, even with the excruciatingly sensitive techniques available today.

There are estimated to be 1.5 million individuals in the U.S. with virus antibody. Yet, so far, only 54,000 AIDS sick cases have emerged in eight years.

Theory: Supposedly, a vaccine could stop AIDS. **Duesberg:** Vaccines work by triggering the immune defenses of the body, which HIV does all by itself. Vaccination will not benefit people already exposed to HIV, because nearly all have HIV antibodies in their blood, i.e., are already immune.

Leading doctors and scientists who had refused to acknowledge Peter Duesberg at all are beginning to discuss the merits of his argument.

"[Duesberg] makes a lot of good points," says Dr. Mathilde Krim, head of the American Foundation for AIDS Research. "There has been no proof of causality. But there is often no proof in human infectious diseases. You see, we can't prove HIV causes this disease and Dr. Duesberg cannot prove it does not! That's science."

Dr. Frank Lilly, Commission member and retrovirologist at Albert Einstein:

SPIN: Isn't Peter Duesberg pointing to serious gaps in the HIV theory?

Lilly: Certainly. There are an awful lot of gaps in what we know. There are huge numbers of questions we need to answer, but can't right now.

SPIN: Where is the defect in his argument that the virus is active only in one in ten thousand cells, and that the body can replenish T-cells four hundred times as fast as it can infect them?

Lilly: You have gone a little beyond my capacity to cope with it now. I am not a real expert on this.

SPIN: But aren't you the scientist on the Commission?

Lilly: Yes, I am the only Commission member who knows anything whatsoever about basic science! But I have never worked with the AIDS virus. I work with mouse leukemia viruses. I try to keep up with HIV studies, but I don't profess to be an expert.

Peter should stop bellyaching. If HIV isn't the cause, then dammit, he should be looking for the cause. He shouldn't sit around and bitch about other people being wrong. Maybe he's right. I can't swear to you he's not right. It's just that there are an awful lot of people who find the HIV theory fairly convincing.

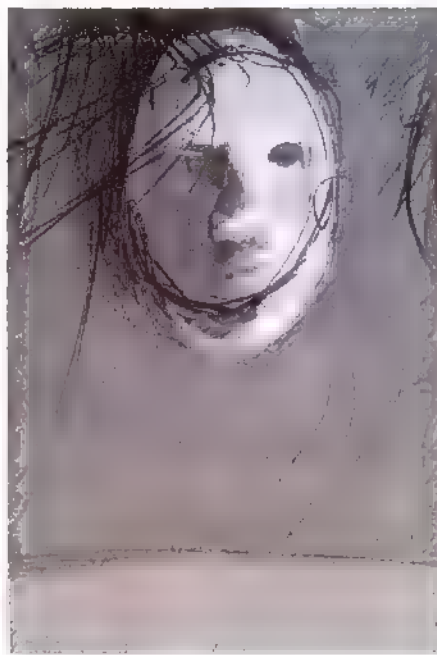
Alfred Sabin, discoverer of the live polio vaccine:

"There is only one point about Peter Duesberg and there's no point in getting into side alleys. He says the virus is not the cause of the disease and he is wrong. Dead wrong. No question. And I have no reason to be partial. The evidence is there. HIV destroys the cells of the immune system. Other little details of the pathogenesis haven't been worked out yet. He's getting the AIDS virus mixed up with all kinds of other retroviruses with a different history."

David Baltimore, Nobel prize winning retrovirologist and Director of the Whitehead Institute of Cambridge:

SPIN: How would you refute Duesberg's reasoning?

Baltimore: It is impossible to absolutely refute anything in science. If you wish to take a skeptical



view, you can challenge almost anything. It is really a matter of judgement, and in this case Peter has poor judgement as to what is important to take into account. But I can't refute him. No one can.

SPIN: Do you have any ammunition that would really knock him dead?

Baltimore: Try a bullet.

—Anthony Liversidge and Celia Farber

AL-721 FINALLY AVAILABLE

How effective can journalism be?

Five months ago, in our December issue, we reported on how AIDS treatment AL-721 was being needlessly suppressed. Now, the bureaucratic logjam that kept it off the market has been broken.

According to a spokesperson at Los Angeles-based Ethigen Corp., the licensed U.S. distributor of AL-721, SPIN's article played a key role in focusing national attention to the scandal. AL-721 was being kept off the shelves of drug stores and food outlets, even though the patented lipid compound, developed from ordinary hen's eggs by Israel's prestigious Weizmann Institute of Science, is regarded as perfectly safe for human consumption. The FDA has asserted the product must be subjected to all phases of the drug approval process before being made available as a drug, even though it could be authorized immediately as a food substance.

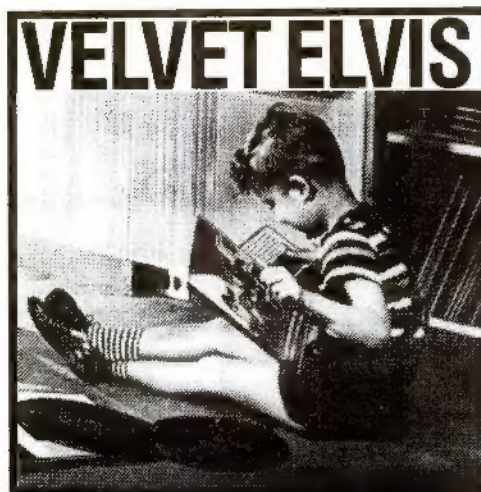
Now Ethigen has announced that it plans to market AL-721 as a food substance. This is great news for thousands of AIDS sufferers who have been purchasing AL-721 clones in hundreds of "guerilla clinics" around the world.

MITCHELL from page 68

hours you'll only hear more of that one song. Is there a slot for you in that scheme of things? What are your hopes for this record?

No, I don't fit in anywhere and I don't dare indulge in hope for this record. They hated my last two albums and ate me alive on the Mingus record. *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* was named the worst album of 1975 by Rolling Stone. My album of 13 years ago, *Court and Spark*, was probably the last time there was a consensus of good feeling, but I couldn't handle all the attention that record generated around me. And of course, after that, it was time for me to pay, because once you've had your glory they're out to get you. I'd like people to hear this record, but I seem to be out of synch with the times in this decade. Am I early or am I late? I don't know. In 1983, I released *Wild Things Run Fast*, which was an album of love songs celebrating my marriage. It came out during the most anti-romantic period in pop music I can remember, ever. This was right when videos were first happening and the videos were not very tender—lots of women in spike heels grinding men's hands into the ground. The general response to my record was 'yuuck, love songs.' From that we segued into a period of rah-rah Reaganism, at which time I released *Dog Eat Dog*, which espouses an almost evangelical humanism. At that time people didn't seem to want to think about the things we were bringing down on ourselves, and though *Time* magazine eventually did in-depth discussions of almost every issue the album raised, people seemed to think I was immature to have this point of view when the album came out. Obviously, these things are frustrating to me, but I've come to accept that I must write what I feel when I feel it and can't make my life unravel in a particular way. I can only do what is given me.

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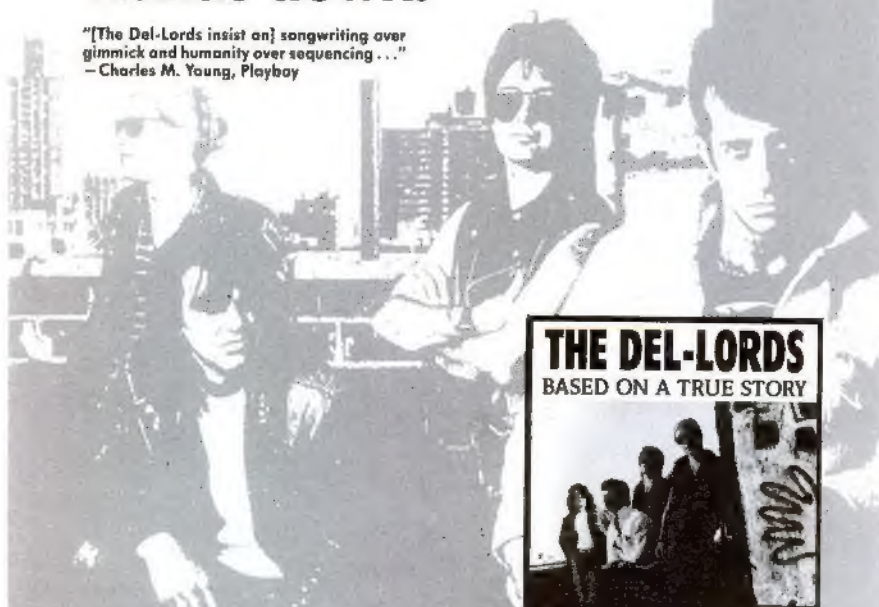


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"[The Del-Lords insist on] songwriting over gimmick and humanity over sequencing..."
— Charles M. Young, *Playboy*



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I KNOW IT'S ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL AND I LIKE IT *EXCEPT FOR THESE EIGHTEEN THINGS*

Cranky ruminations by Michael Corcoran

1. DRUM SOLOS. It's excruciatingly unjust that people are serving time in prison for victimless crimes while overindulgent drummers are walking the streets.

2. ENCORES. Remember the days when encores were more than just a Heineken break for bands before they came back out to do their biggest hit? Me neither.

3. ROCK CRITICS. They are to real writers what a miniature golf course is to Pebble Beach: They both have the same number of holes, but all similarity ends there.

4. PEOPLE WHO WEAR THEIR BACKSTAGE PASSES ON THEIR PANTS, JUST ABOVE THE KNEE. Why don't they just hold up a sign that says, "This is my first time backstage and boy am I excited"?

5. CONCERT PROMOTERS AND THEIR GIRLFRIENDS, DESIRÉE.

6. SOLICITED AUDIENCE RESPONSE. *The dance floor is empty. They can't hear us. C'mon, we can do better than that. They want us to really sing loud this time.* Hey, most of those jerks with the Julie Christie haircuts should be glad we're there at all. You want me to dance? Then give me back the money I paid to get in.

7. GIRLS WHO SIT ON GUYS' SHOULDERS, FLAIL THEIR ARMS, AND AFTERWARDS TELL THEIR FRIENDS THAT THE LEAD SINGER WAS LOOKING RIGHT AT THEM.

8. PEOPLE WHO BRING DOGS TO OUTDOOR CONCERTS. What kind of sadist would subject his or her pet to a hot afternoon in a field packed with inebriated servicemen, stoned metal heads, nostalgic yuppies, and assorted white trash revelers—all boogying like their rhythm was confiscated at the gate along with that bottle of Southern Comfort? I've seen happier-looking lab animals.

9. OUTDOOR CONCERTS, IN GENERAL. They've perfected multi-million-dollar sound systems and stage sets. Do you think maybe they could come up with a portable toilet that flushes?

10. DRUMMERS WHO SING ALONG WITH THE VOCALIST EVEN THOUGH THEIR VOICE IS NOT MIKED. I never saw Keith Moon's or John Bonham's lips moving along with those of the San Quentin pin-up boys up front. Moon and Bonham were proud to be drummers, and both flamed out early like great drummers do. But death is cooler than looking like you'd rather be up there with your bulge in the spotlight and then later joining the Firm.

11. DRUMMERS, IN GENERAL. Here they come / Walking down the street / In their black Ziljian T-shirts / That prove they keep the beat / CHORUS: Hey, hey they're the drummers / Neighbors say they play way too loud / But everyone really loves them / When they throw their sticks in the crowd / They don't jam on *Late Night* / It's the singers and guitarists Dave loves / But they make more than Paul Shaffer / Wearing only satin shorts and black gloves.

12. ACTS ON MTV THAT YOU CAN TELL ARE BRITISH WITH THE SOUND OFF. C'mon fellas, a little bit of sun won't kill you. If the sun comes into contact with your skin, it makes it less pallid, and healthier looking. Of course, the sun might also lighten your hair a little, especially the parts that are closest to it, and you'll probably have to take off that long black leather coat, and you might find it a little harder to be depressed all the time and... hello, hell-oh-oh.

13. WHEN ROADIES BEND OVER TO FIX SOMETHING ONSTAGE. What the heck is a 250-lb guy doing wearing a medium T-shirt, and why does he wash it in hot water? If they're going to wear their pants low so they can button them under the beer belly, roadies should at least put on a shirt that conceals their gluteal gulch. I don't mean a little

crease above their belts that looks like where you put your quarter in to get a newspaper—I'm talking about a slot that you could fit the whole newspaper in, even on Sunday. A couple of years ago, I was ecstatic to see elected officials speaking out against this long-ignored problem, then I found out that "the crack epidemic" referred instead to some sort of drug.

14. THE HOSPITALITY ROOM BACKSTAGE. They have a lot of nerve calling carrot sticks and cheese food "hospitality." Where's the beer, the Swedish meatballs, the lox, the celebs? They're all in a room next to the headliner's dressing room, that you need a laminated pass to get into. There, the privileged few and a girl named Desirée stuff their faces, pack their nostrils, get drunk, and watch a TV that monitors the action in the Hospitality Room, erupting with laughter when someone dips a carrot stick into the large bowl of Koopectate that looks just like sour cream.

15. PEOPLE WHO STAND OUTSIDE CONCERTS WITH SIGNS THAT SAY THAT THEY NEED TICKETS. Don't believe them. Most have been hired by scalpers to create the illusion that tickets are hard to get. I first became suspicious of these forlorn "fans" when I saw one outside a Southside Johnny concert in a state other than New Jersey. Then a few weeks later I heard one ticket-needer tell a scalper, "This sucks. I thought giving plasma was bad. But at least I kept my self-respect." Then he crumpled up his sign asking for two tickets to Whitesnake and stormed off.

16. WHITESNAKE, IN GENERAL. David Coverdale should be charged with Impersonating Someone Half His Age, Both Physically and Lyrically. This guy used to sing with Deep Purple, for crissakes, who were around so long ago that they were once notorious for throwing big wooden radios into hotel swimming pools. When Purple first performed on the Ed Sullivan Show, censors made them change "My Woman from Tokyo" to "My Fiancée from Texas," and Coverdale was shown only from above the waist and below the lips. Today, ol'

Dorian Graysnake is a heartthrob to girls who tease their parents about how they looked in the photo of them taken outside an arena with Deep Purple on the marquee.

17. BEING ADDRESSED AS THE CITY THE CONCERT IS IN. My name is not Baltimore, Cleveland, Dallas, or New York, and I don't like being called them or any other name that is taped to the monitor in front of the singer. If bands want to create a rapport with their fans, why not greet them with something more personal and appropriate, like, "Hello, white people! Hello, blacks! Hello, Hispanics! Hello, others!"? Or how about, "Hello, Aquarians! Hello, Geminis! Hello, Tauris!" and on until everyone has been mentioned? It would take longer to use these salutations, but they could just start the show 55 minutes late instead of an hour.

18. SONGS ABOUT BEING IN A BAND ON THE ROAD. What a hard life it is, with all those anonymous meals, monotonous travel, and the endless series of sound checks, interviews, and draining performances. Why can't they be home with their wives and kids, playing with the dog, instead of in a hotel room somewhere that looks exactly like the previous 27, having meaningless sex with two 16-year-olds whose bodies are as bronzed and flawless as each of the previous 54. Any rock star knows that two 16-year-old girls do not come close to equalling a 32-year-old woman. There's more to life than dirty deeds with D students with D-cups, and so they go on, dreary thousand-dollar day after dreary sex-filled night, looking in vain for a combination that matches 32: A 13-year-old and a 19-year-old do come pretty damn close in Topeka, as do the 11-year-old twins and their 10-year-old sister, ah, but then comes another breakfast at Denny's and four hours of watching movies on the bus ride to Lincoln. You and I might decide to end it all if this existence were ours, but rock stars turn the torture into three minutes and twenty-eight seconds of sensitive rock 'n' roll on the last cut of their third album, the first song on the live album, and in the sequel to *Light of Day*. ☘



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